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Vol. X. No. 57. DECEMBER, 1903.

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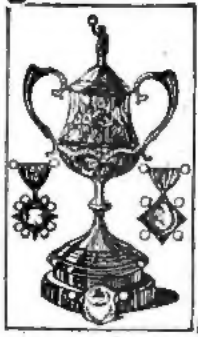

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22 Bulgaria	6	22 Nicaragua	6	20 Venezuela	7
16 Chili	6	15 Peru	6	10 Borneo	9
13 Colombia	6	16 Luxemburg	6	29 Canada	6
13 Costa Rica	4	24 Portugal	6	16 Cape of Good Hope	9
13 Guatemala	6	30 Roumania	6	25 India	6
30 Holland	4	15 Finland	5	19 Newfoundland	10
20 Honduras	9	20 Servia	6	16 Labuan	9
19 Ecuador	4	30 Spain	9		

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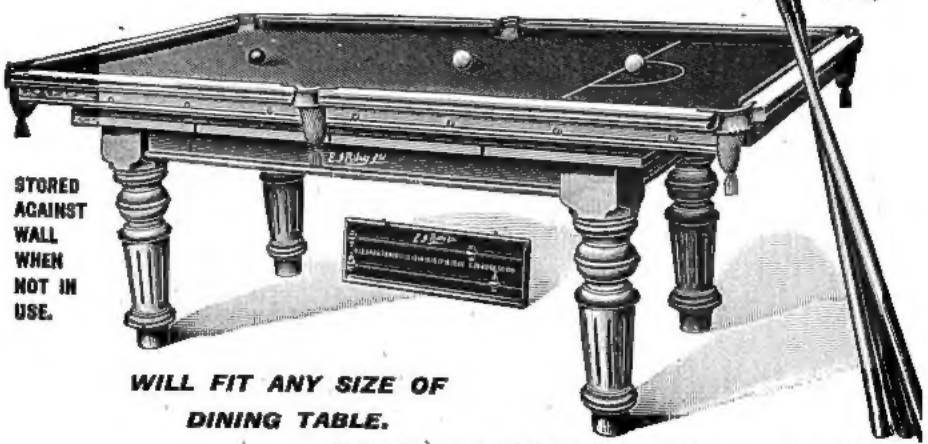

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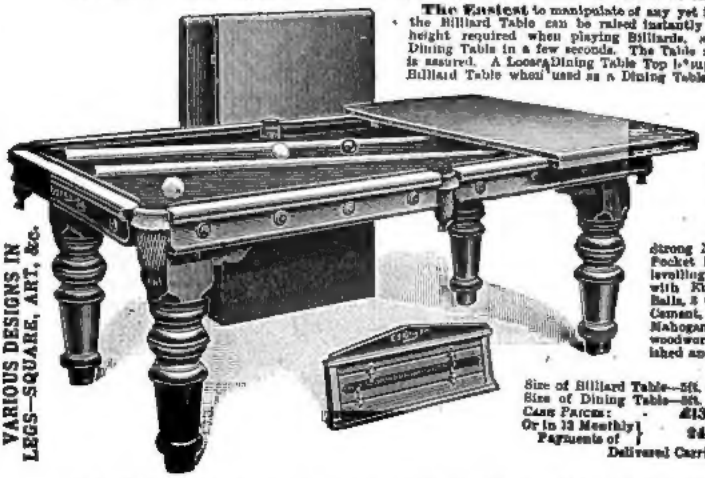

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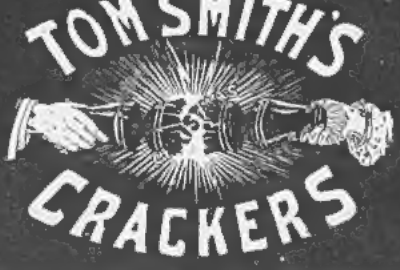

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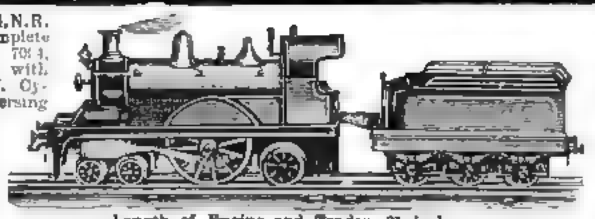

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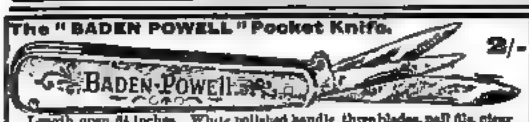

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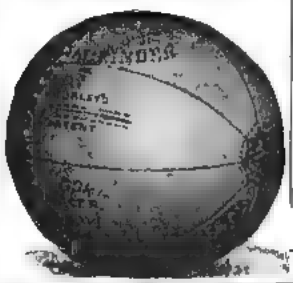

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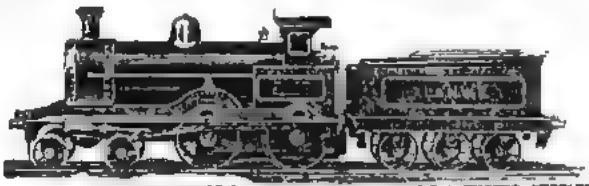

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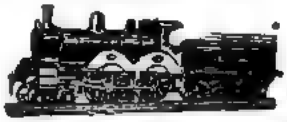

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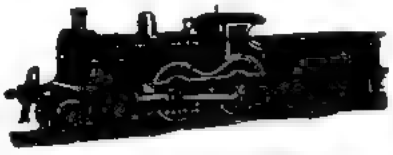

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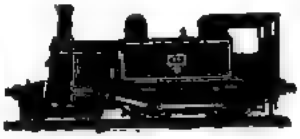

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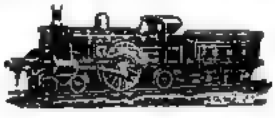

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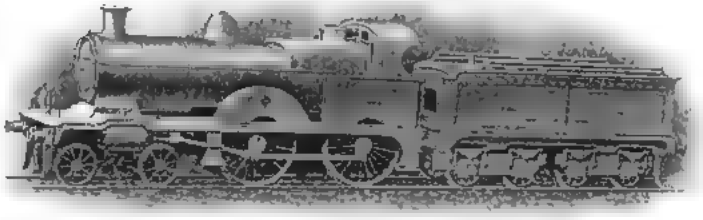

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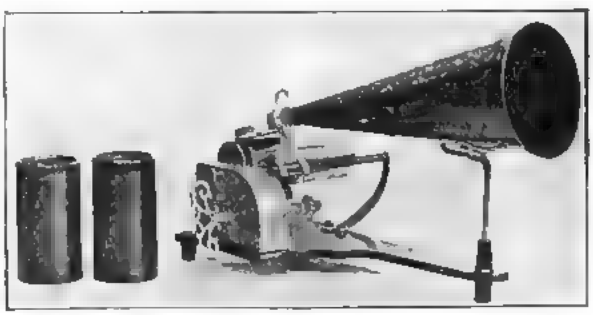
See Page 284.



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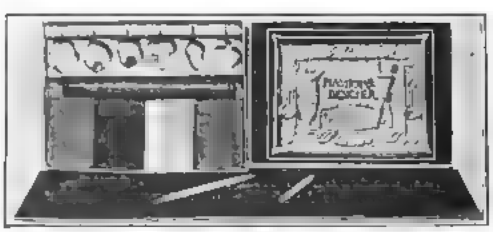

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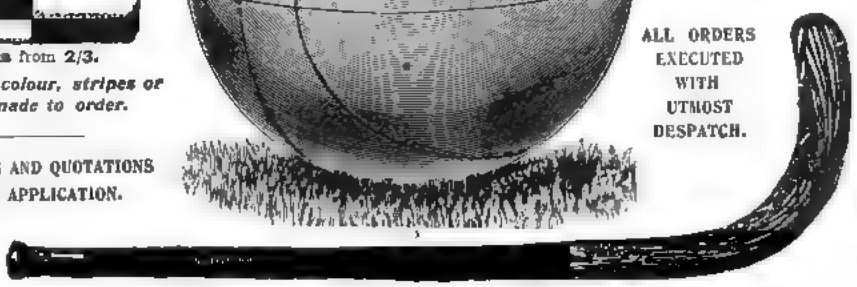

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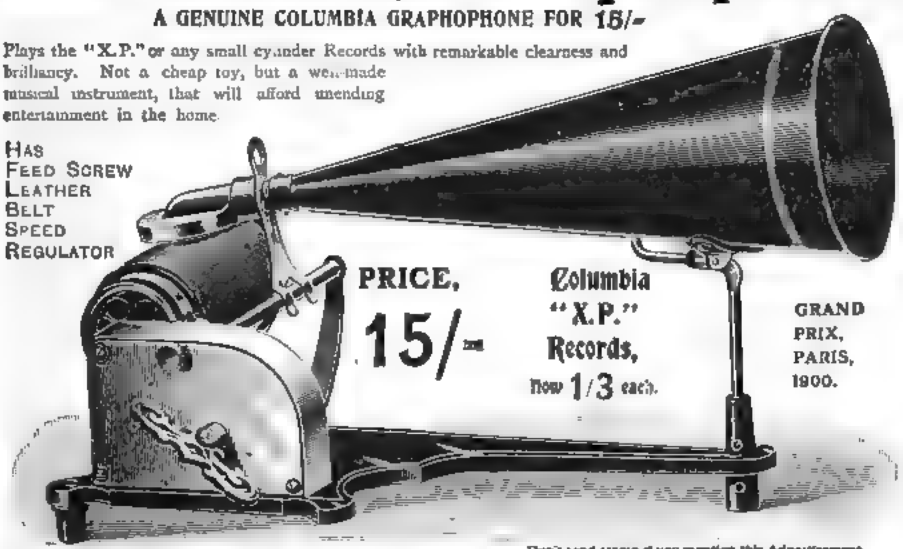

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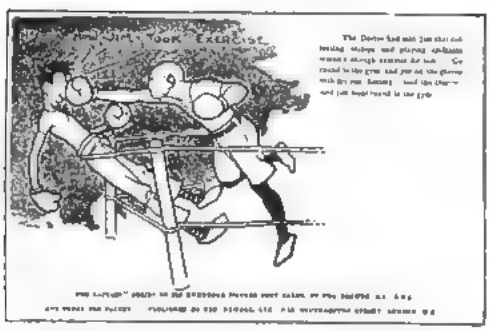

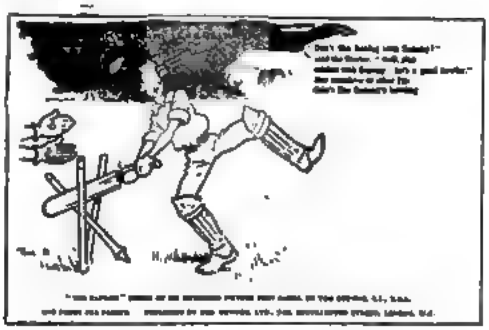

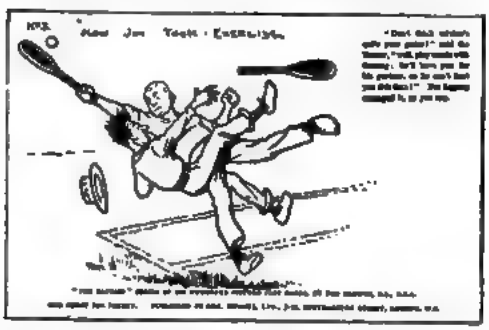

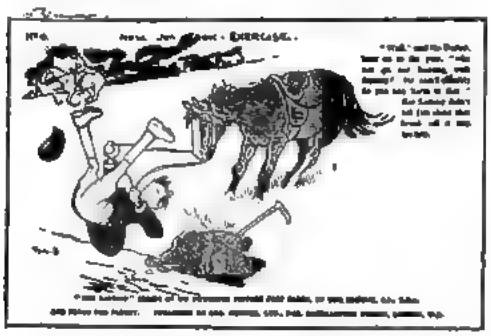

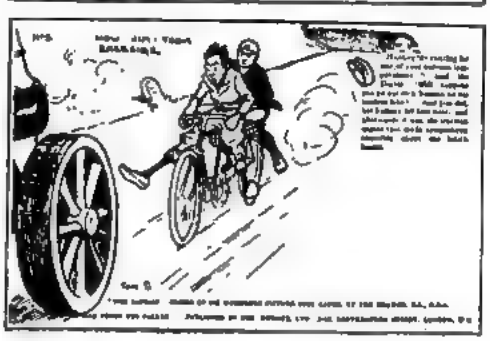

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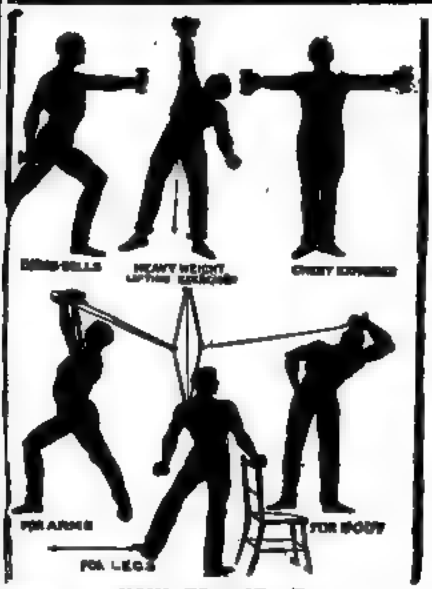

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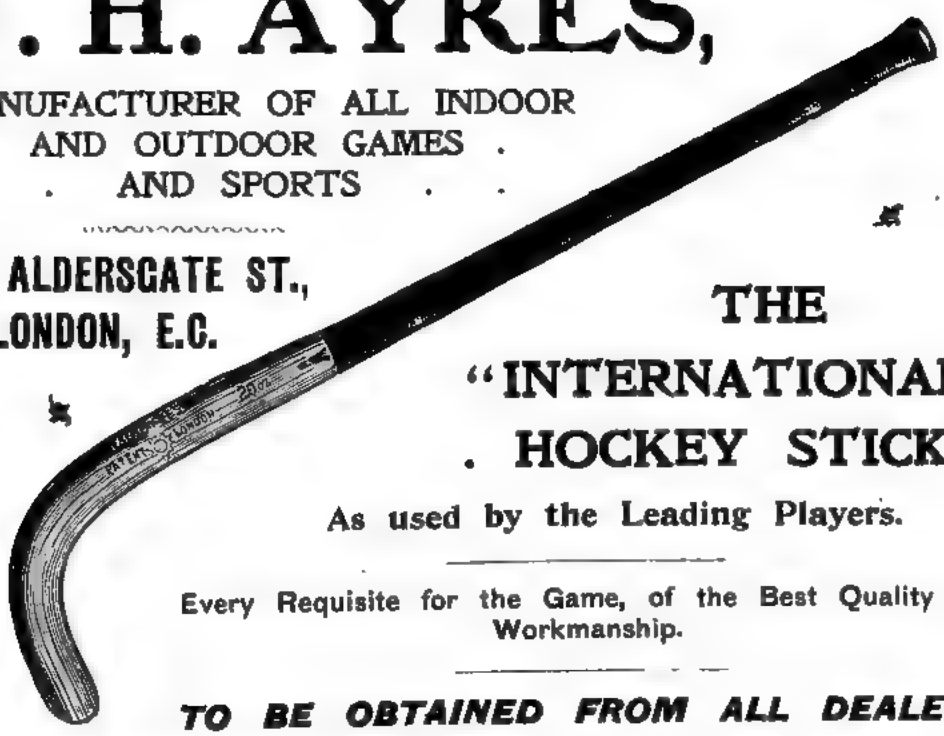

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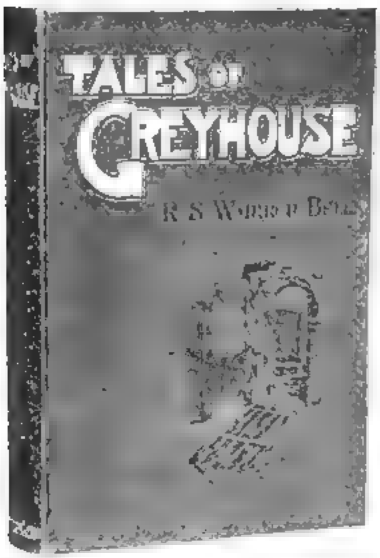

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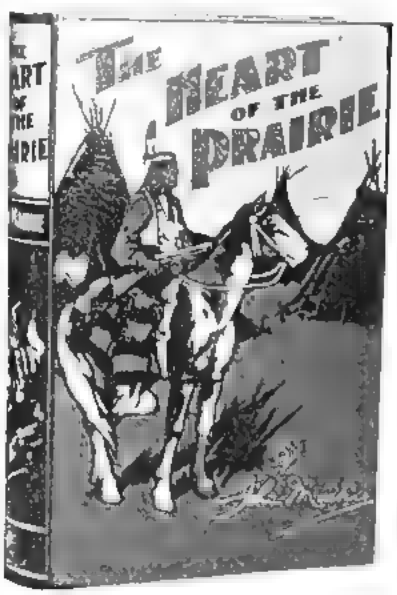

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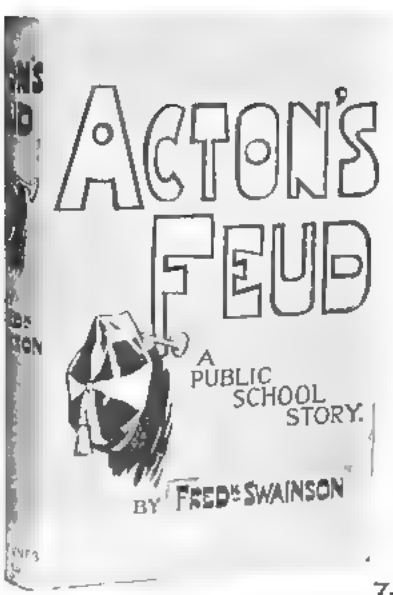

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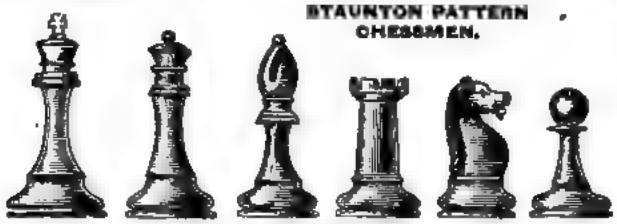

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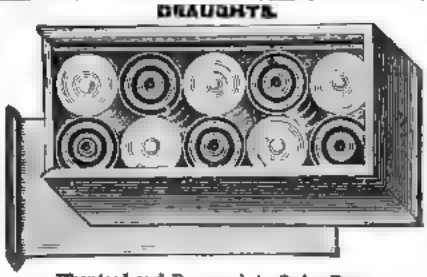

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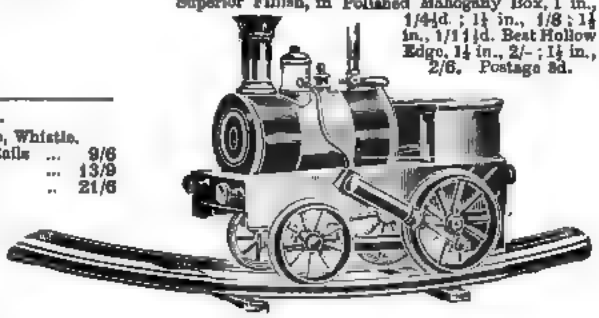

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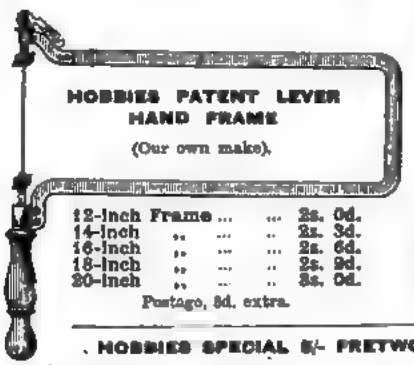

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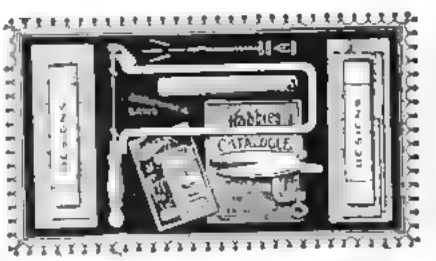

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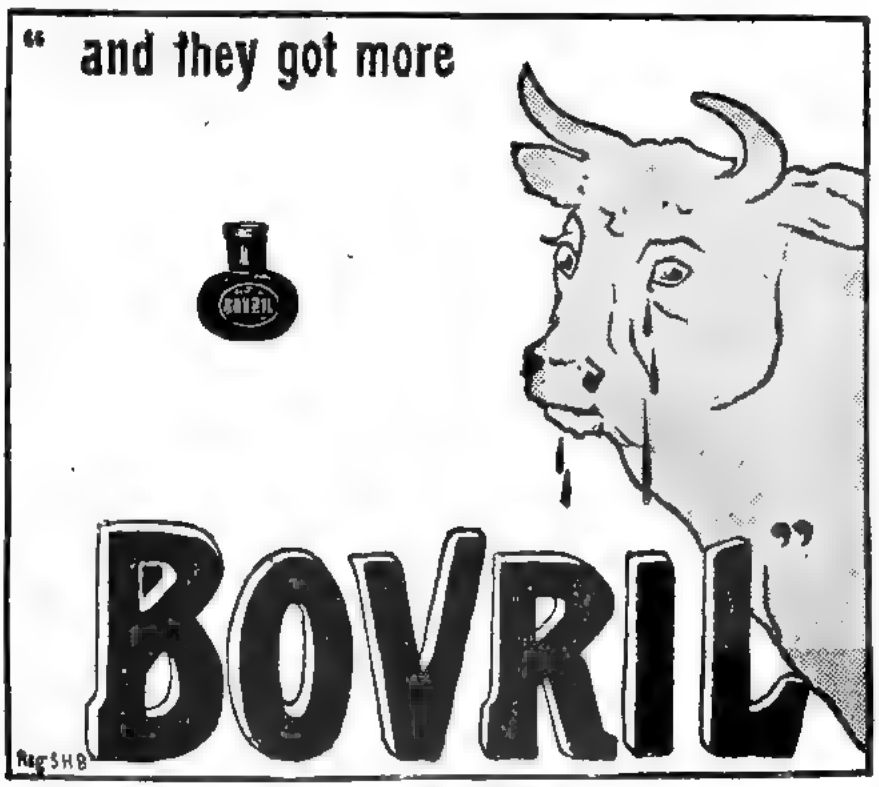

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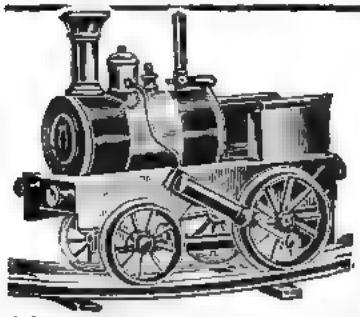

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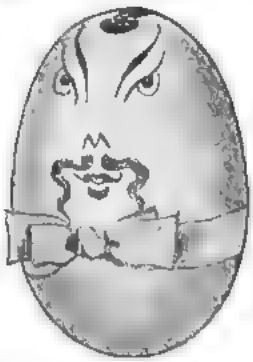

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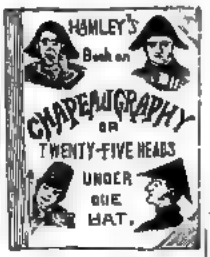

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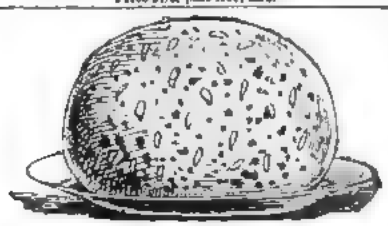

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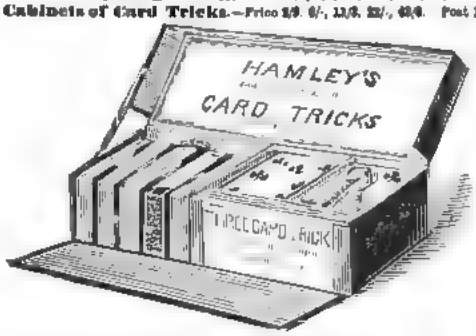

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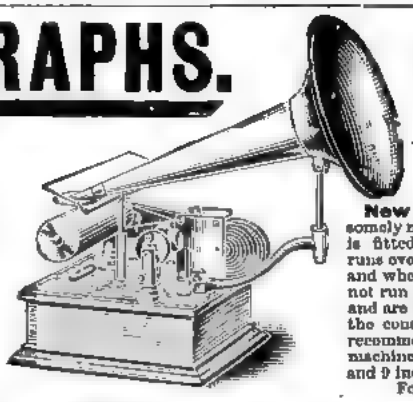

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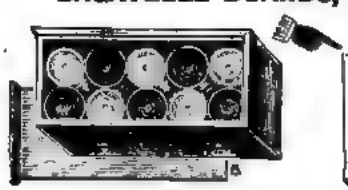

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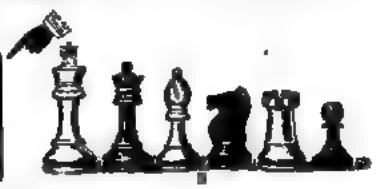

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Per set of four ... ... 9/- net.
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To face back of Front.

AT THE FANCY-DRESS BALL.

Tom: "Hullo! Been to many dances this Christmas?"
Dick: "No, only this one. But I've had two fights and five suppers!"

Drawn by B. E. Minns.

MR ALFRED PEARSE AT WORK IN HIS STUDIO AT HAMPSTEAD HEATH WITH HIS SON, COLBRON, WHO ILLUSTRATED "A BATTLE ROYAL," IN THE NOVEMBER "CAPTAIN"

Photo by Geo Newnes, Ltd

CHRISTMAS WITH A. P.

(ALFRED PEARSE.)

By A. B. Cooper.

"HANG the telephone! Hallo! Who are you?"

"4188 Gerrard, Captain. Are you Mr. Cooper?"

"I am."

"Well, the editor wants to speak to you, so will you kindly hold the line."

* * * * *

"Hallo, are you there?"

"Yes, are you the Old Fag?"

"That is what I am called when I look kind and old. Er—I want you to go to Hampstead and interview A. P."

"A. P. what?"

"No, not A. P. Watt! The only A. P."

"Don't know him."

"Don't know Alf. Pearse, the famous black and white artist! You evidently don't read your Captain regularly, to say nothing of the Strand, Sunday Strand, and a host of other magazines."

"Of course I know *Alf. Pearse*—have known him for years and could write an interview with him without going to see him, but I'll go all the same."

"I should just think you will." And the telephone rang off.

Now, Mr. Alfred Pearse, to give him his full style and title, is an inventor as well as an artist, but he has egregiously failed, like the rest of folks, to invent a method of turning off the rain-water tap at will. That secret is still in nature's keeping and likely to remain there, or otherwise, such is his kind disposition, he would certainly have contrived a fine day for my visit. But, alas! this soaking year was beating all previous records when I caught a train and started on my journey to the North-West heights.

Happy Hampstead looked anything but happy, and the weeping willows which fringe the edge of the Heath and give Willow-road, in which Mr. Pearse lives, its cognomen, were shedding tears at the rate of about a thousand a minute.

The moment the door of No. 14 opened, however, "the scene was changed—and such a change!" Cheery warmth for cheerless cold; dry humour for damp misery; a cosy fireside and smiling faces, which gave you a sort of Christmas feeling all over, in place of the misty, far-stretching Heath, and the dolorous willows! I was no sooner introduced to Mrs. Pearse, herself an artist and author, to one of four clever daughters, a

THIS IS THE MAGPIE WHICH BELONGED TO SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A., AND IS DEPICTED IN HIS WELL-KNOWN WORK, "THE MAID AND THE MAGPIE," NOW IN THE TATE ART GALLERY, LONDON. IT IS NOW THE PROPERTY OF MR. ALFRED PEARSE.

Photo by George Newnes, Ltd.

painter of miniatures, and to young Colbron Pearse, some of whose work appeared in the November number of THE CAPTAIN, and who promises to be a worthy successor to his father in the black and white world, than A. P. commenced telling stories and showing me the quaint and curious things in which his house abounds. But the luncheon bell sounded and succeeded in checking the flow of his delightful conversation for the space of three minutes and a half. Then he made up for lost time. Where A. P. has not been; what A. P. has not done; the accidents which have not happened to A. P., are probably not worth visiting, not worth doing, and possibly not worth suffering. He has "been and gone and done" everything and left the poor, average mortal nothing fresh to start on.

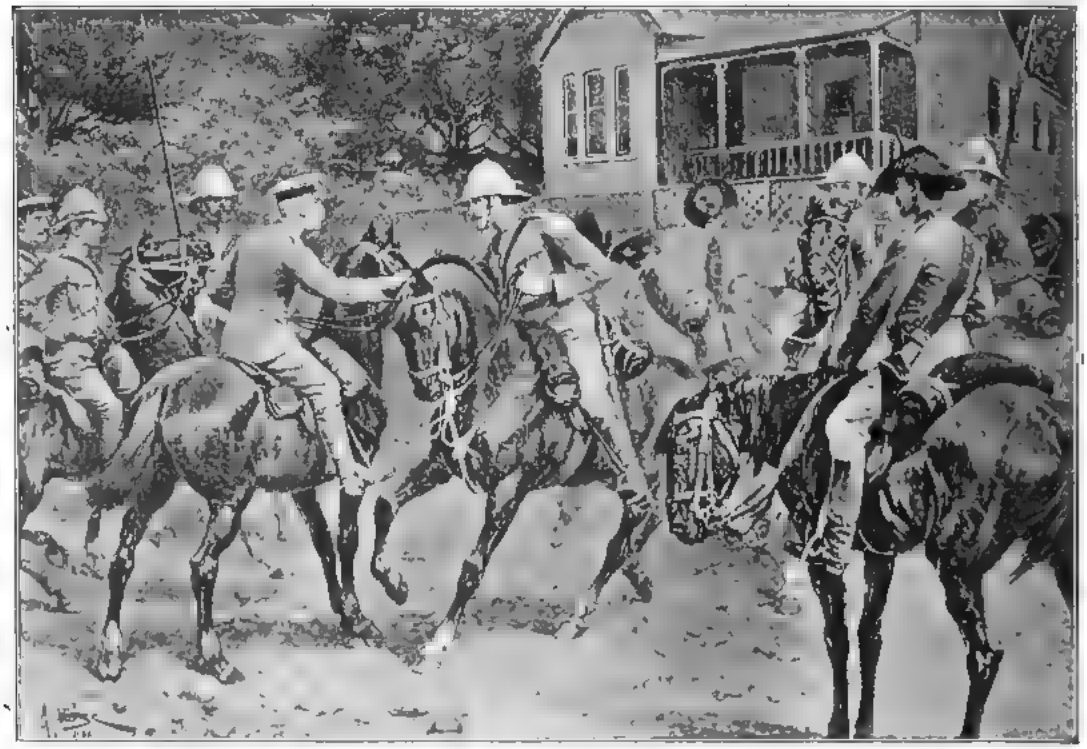
"A. P." AT THE AGE OF 3.
From a photo.

"They tell me, Mr. Pearse," I said, modestly, breaking the silence which had settled like a pall upon the dining-room for the space of ten seconds, "they tell me that you have been on the dizzy brink of death on at least one occasion?"

A. P. looked at me out of the corner of his eye to make quite sure that I was joking, and then said drily:

"Yes, I met with my first accident, which certainly ought to have been fatal, like the rest of them, when I was eleven months old, for my nurse nearly dropped me plump into the sea over the side of a steamer, and since then I have met with no less than twenty-nine 'practically fatal' accidents."

"Well, all I can say, Mr. Pearse," I remarked, looking him straight in the eyes, "is, that killing agrees with you."



THE RELIEF OF LADYSMITH.

From the painting by Alfred Pearse. By permission of Messrs. Frost and Reed, art publishers, of Bristol and Clifton, owners of the copyright, who have published engravings of these subjects.

THE RELIEF OF MAFEKING.

From the painting by Alfred Pearse. By permission of Messrs. Frost and Reed, Art Publishers, of Bristol and Clifton, owners of the copyright, who have published engravings of these subjects.

"Yes," said A. P., "I can still run 100 yards in 11½ seconds; I can still try to knock the stuffing out of much bigger men than myself with the gloves; I can still play cricket through a hot summer day and be nearly as fresh at the finish as the young 'uns; and I can still hit a threepenny piece with a revolver five times out of six at twelve paces, so you see I am not quite done for yet."

"But you were talking about your accidents," I said, for I found him a terror to switch off the main line and get into a siding.

"Yes, of course I was. You want to hear the details of some of them. Well, when I was studying wood-engraving in Paternoster Row at the age of seventeen, an old gentleman whom I knew, and who, to put it mildly, was a bit 'dotty,' called at the office one afternoon. Mr. Nicholls, the head, came in and said:

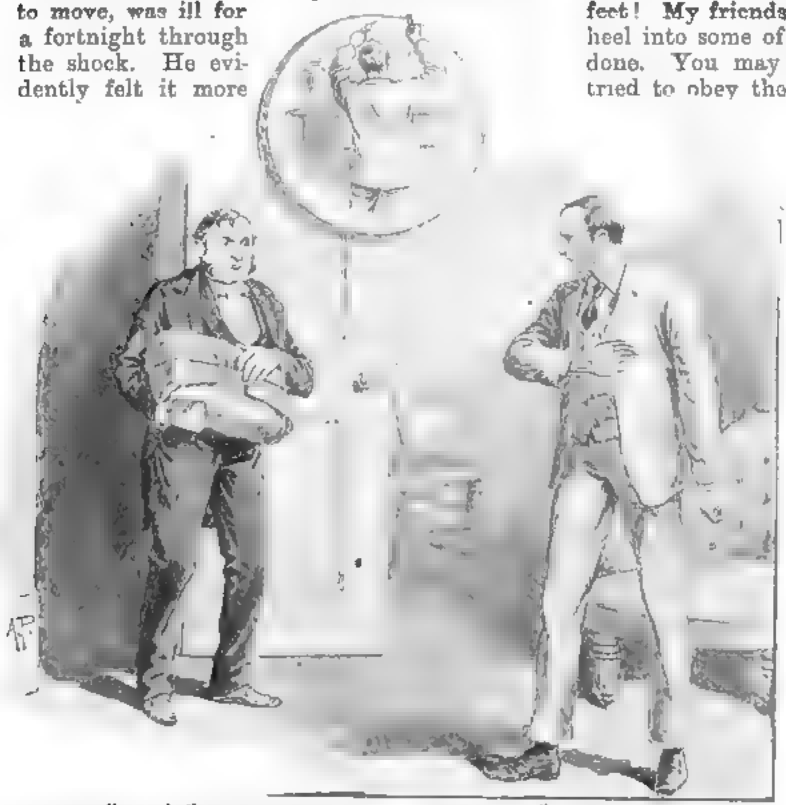
"'Who is that madman sitting on the stairs?'

"Thinking it might be my old friend, I went out to reconnoitre. He immediately seized me by my coat-collar and left arm and hung me over a square well-staircase, sixty feet deep. The maniac said:

"A. P." AT THE AGE OF 30

"'I am going to drop you, Alf; aren't you afraid?'

"I was, most terrifically, but I swallowed a lump in my throat and said, 'No, because I know you will pull me back again.' For an awful half minute he held me hanging there, and then said: 'I will, then,' and putting me down on the stairs he rushed away leaving his hat and umbrella behind him. A youth named Kirby, who saw the whole affair, but was too petrified with terror to move, was ill for a fortnight through the shock. He evidently felt it more than I did, for I was as right as a trivet ten minutes after.



ONE OF "A. P.'S" WELL-KNOWN ILLUSTRATIONS TO "A DOG WITH A BAD NAME," IN "THE BOY'S OWN PAPER," REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE EDITOR.

"In 1886 my arm was partially paralysed, and I thought I was going to be a cripple for life; in fact, the doctor told me that I should be. However, I invented a wonderful liniment which did the trick effectually, and that arm is now as sound as its brother. But I have another accident to record of that period which nearly put an end to my earthly career. Of course, I was tremendously anxious that my arm should recover its normal strength, and I thought mountain air would do me as much good as anything, so I spent Christmas of that year at St. Moritz. In spite of my 'game' arm I was doing a little mountain climbing. There was a party of us out one day, and, as we were not going to make any record ascent, we were not roped together, and I was leading to find dangerous places. I slipped on the glacier and immediately went down the slope as though I were on a toboggan slide. That would have been all right, perhaps, had not the slide ended in a sudden drop of 500 feet! My friends shouted to me to drive my heel into some of the snow. Easier said than done. You may imagine how frantically I tried to obey them, and at last I succeeded so well that not only my heel but my right leg disappeared. The impetus of my descent brought my body upright, and then bashed my face forward on to the crisp snow, bruising it, almost stunning me, and making my nose bleed. However, something more than my nose would have bled had I continued my downward course, and I was glad to be stopped at so slight a cost.

"Talking of Christmas, I had a funny experience at my country home. I had a sledge built for the horses to pull, but on Christmas Eve, as it was a lovely clear night, and as the shafts were not ready or the splash board on for the horses, I fastened the children's donkey to the sledge by means of rope traces. You can imagine it would be all right on the level or going up the hills, except on occasions such as when the donkey persisted in lying down in the snow and rolling over and over like a dog does after he has had a swim, but in coming back home there was a long hill to descend. Think of it. I had no brake which I could put on to check the gathering velocity of the sledge, and the slack ropes were of no avail to the donkey for holding the sledge back. Moreover, the poor brute could not run fast enough to keep ahead, so the sledge overtook the donkey, scooped him up as a shovel might scoop up

snow, and *Neddy sat inside beside me and we went down the hill together!*

"The omnibus, cab, and railway accidents in which I have taken an unwilling part are, in the stock phrase of the newspapers, 'far too numerous to mention.' I have been shot with a revolver, rescued from drowning twice, had a rib broken with a cricket bat, my left eyeball forced outside the lid, and the O. F. himself will remember seeing me walk into THE CAPTAIN office with bandages all over me, the result of falling off the top of an omnibus.—No, I am practically a teetotaller, so you needn't look at me in that tone of voice."

"Well, that is mostly tragedy, Mr. Pearse," I said. "You have surely had an admixture of comedy in your experiences?" I added, innocently, although I knew very well, and he knew that I knew, that as a "Special" all over the world, he had been forced to use his wits on hundreds of occasions.

FROM "THE DIS-ORDER OF THE BATH," IN "THE BOY'S OWN PAPER," REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE EDITOR.

"Yes," he said, smiling at the recollection, "I remember once that the Prince of Wales, now King Edward, was to open the Agricultural Show at Norwich. Special artists could not get tickets either for love or money. All my friends of the Illustrateds went down, hoping against hope that, in some unforeseen way, Providence would come to their aid. But, you know, I have a way of making my own Providence, and I made it this time. Although I knew it was a forlorn hope, I went to the Secretary and he promised to let me have a ticket at my Hotel that night. Of course it did not arrive. I never expected it would. However, I sallied forth at five o'clock in the morning and went to the gates of the ground upon which the Show was to be held. I don't know whether you have ever watched the preparations

AN ILLUSTRATION BY "A. P." TO "THE COCK HOUSE AT FELLSGARTH," IN "THE BOY'S OWN PAPER," REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE EDITOR.

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF FACTORY GIRLS FROM "A. P.'S" NOTEBOOK.

for an Agricultural Show, but if you have you will know that it almost invariably rains, and that the ground at the entrance becomes a perfect quagmire. The consequence is that when some big, lumbering agricultural implement comes along, on a big, lumbering waggon, the whole thing sticks fast and will neither go backward nor forward. I found them just in the thick of one of these episodes, and, seeing my opportunity, I literally put my shoulder to the wheel. Whether it was the addition of my stupendous strength or not, I cannot say, but in the thing went and I, patiently and laboriously *keeping* my shoulder to the wheel, or at least to its near neighbourhood, *sailed in with it*. Once inside I clean forgot to come out again, and, in sheer absence of mind, was hiding myself among some potato sacks when a burly policeman came up and said:

"'What are you doing here?'

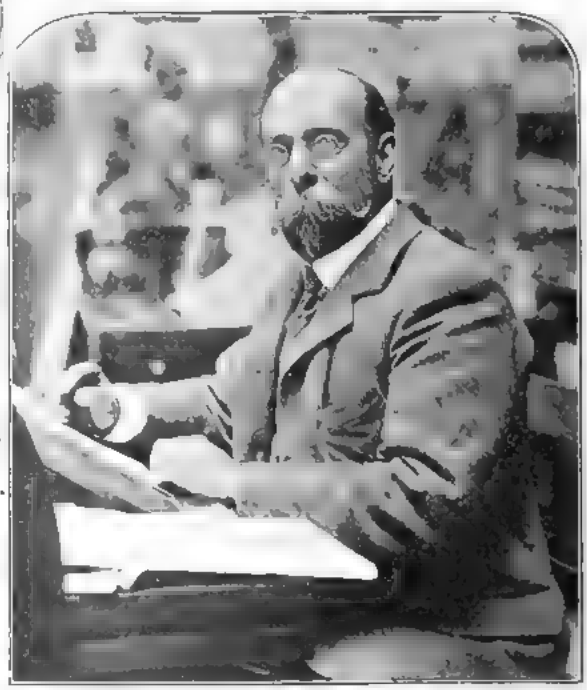
"'Waiting to give you this,' I replied.

"'Thank you, sir, you are all right there, I am sure,' he said, putting 'this' in his pocket. Then I casually mentioned that I was the 'Special' artist of the PICTORIAL WORLD, sent to make sketches of the Prince of Wales and the ceremonies, and the good bobby gave me several 'tips,' in return for mine, with respect to the disposition of the Royal party. About twelve o'clock they arrived, and with them, of course, my friends the special artists of all the other illustrated papers; but as they were not provided with tickets and had neglected to put *their* shoulders to the wheel, they were refused admission. There was a sturdy old countryman keeping the gate.

"'Where's yo'r tickets?' he said, stolidly.

"'We have not got tickets,' they said, with a great show of candour, 'but we are special artists on the so-and-so and so-and-so.'

"'I don't keer what yo' *are* or what yo'r *on*. My orders is as nobody's got to come in without a ticket,' and at that he stuck, and neither argument nor



MR. ALFRED PEARSE AT WORK ON THE DRAWINGS ILLUSTRATING "THE SEA POACHER"
Photo Geo. Newnes, Ltd

bribery could move him. The PICTORIAL WORLD was therefore the only paper that illustrated the event.

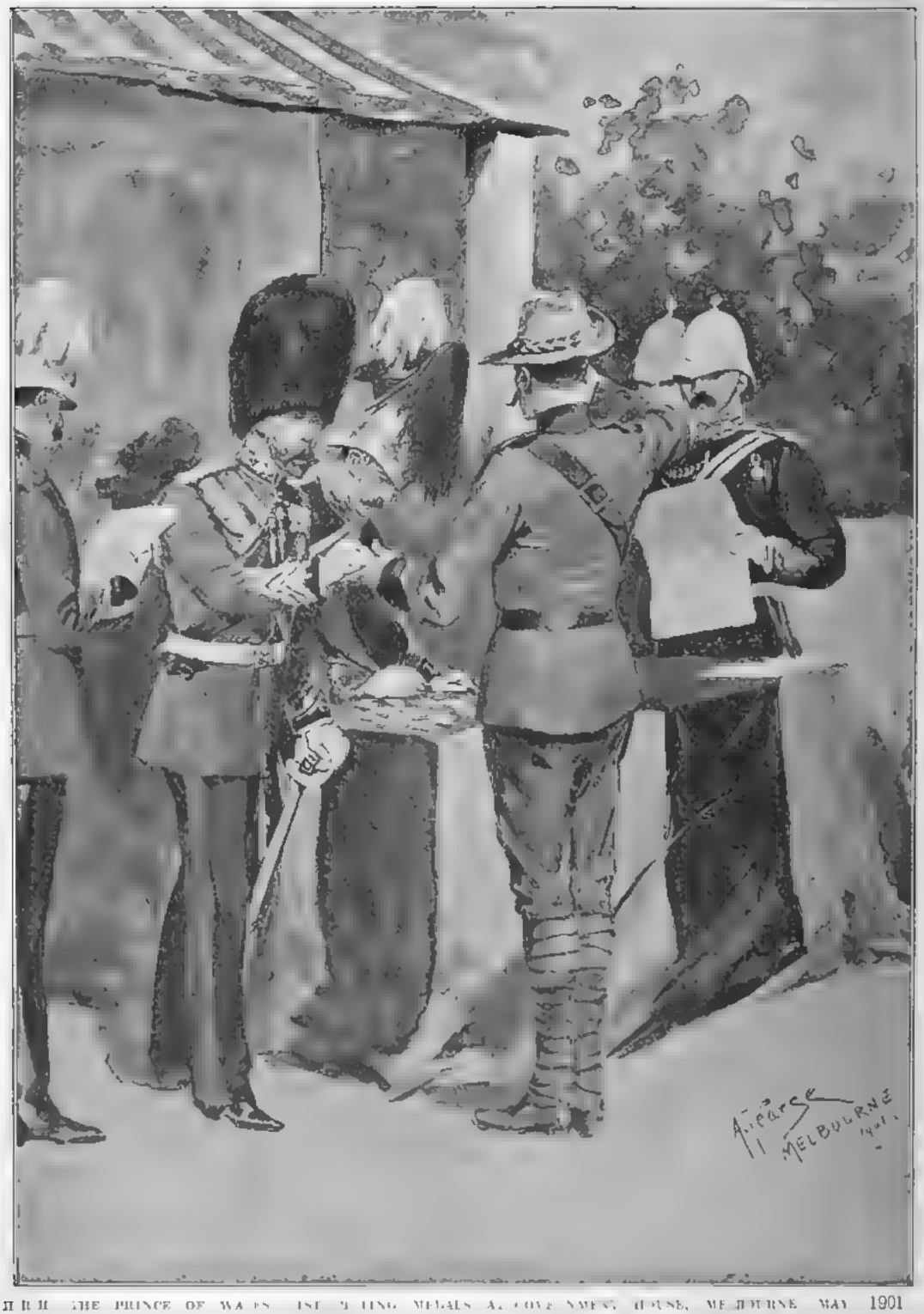
"I have got through many a cordon by means of a large, official envelope and a piece of white cardboard. Not once in a hundred times are you asked to show the inscription thereon. You are taken for granted. I remember once John Bright was to make a great speech on Disestablishment at Spurgeon's Tabernacle, and the Editor of the PICTORIAL WORLD wired me to go. I had not a ticket and so, as I always make a point of obeying orders, I had to use my wits. I stopped at a stationer's shop, purchased a sheet of note-paper and an envelope, addressed the latter to the Right Hon. John Bright, and, presenting it at the door of the Tabernacle, asked permission, as though it were a case of urgency, to deliver it personally. By this means I managed to get on to the platform, and was given a place at John Bright's right hand, where I made the sketches. Some of my brother artists were there also, but they were right at the back of the hall and hardly got a peep of the real thing."

By this time luncheon was over, and A. P. proceeded to show me some of his treasures. And a lot of them he has. Besides the work of his talented father and grandfather, who were both artists and whose pictures adorn his

SOME OF "A. P.'S" MODELS AND CURIOS.
Photo by Geo. Newnes, Ltd.

rooms, he has curiosities from all parts of the world, and a large number of articles which once belonged to Sir Edwin Landseer. In the hall hang three of A. P.'s pictures—The Relief of "Mafeking," "Kimberley," and "Ladysmith," respectively. General White said that the Ladysmith painting gave one a better idea of the "relief" than any other picture he had ever seen, and, considering that A. P. was not there, that was praise indeed. In the hall, too, there hangs a glass case, containing a stuffed magpie, which interested me greatly. It is the very magpie from which Sir Edwin Landseer drew the bird in his famous picture, "The Maid and The Magpie," now in the National collection. He also has boomerangs, spears, tomahawks, and all sorts of curious weapons, chiefly picked up in Australia and New Zealand when he accompanied the present Prince

A GENERAL VIEW OF A. P.'S STUDIO, WHICH IS PACKED WITH CURIOS FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.
Photo Geo. Newnes, Ltd.



H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES INSPECTING MEDALS AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MELBOURNE MAY 1901
THREE-QUARTERS OF AN HOUR'S SKETCH FOR "THE SPHERE" BY ALFRED PEARSE
Reproduced by permission of the Editor of *The Sphere*

of Wales on his memorable tour round the world. A. P. had a great time on this tour. He and Sydney P. Hall were the only two artists who accompanied the Royal party, Mr. Prior joining them in Canada.

Long ago, in his very early days, A.P. earned the sobriquet of "Punctual Pearse" on account of his extreme celerity with brush and pencil, but on this tour he was christened "The Demon Special" for an exactly similar reason.

The picture on the opposite page, entitled "The Prince of Wales giving medals to the Australian Troopers," represents the work of less than one hour, while the sketch on the top of page 201 was completed while Mrs. Pearse was writing a letter, and that not a long one. A. P. is a glutton for work, and, though he is still a comparatively young man, he has executed 5,370 finished drawings since he commenced. Talking of his commencement, he said:

"The best thing that ever happened to me was being disappointed of £16,000 which, up to being nineteen years of age, I counted upon succeeding to. Until then I had not worked seriously. Even when I started in earnest I trudged about the city for eighteen months before I sold a single drawing. Personally I shall always keep a warm place in my heart for Mr. G. A. Hutchison, the Editor of the Boy's Own Paper, Mr. Mason Jackson of the Illustrated London News, Mr. J. H. Thornell of the Pictorial World, and several others who, at a critical time in my career, gave me a helping hand and a bit of encouragement. Fortunately I was never in actual want, and my parents were confident that I would eventually succeed. My dear mother, than whom a lad never had a better, would say to me when I came home dejected: 'Never mind, Sunshine'—her pet name for me—'one day they will be eager to have your work.' Well, that eagerness did not come very rapidly, but my persistency told in the long run, as persistency generally does. Once I overheard an editor say: 'Oh, give that beggar something to do—he is a perfect nuisance.'

"My first real chance came when the fatal news of Isandula gave the nation a shock at eight o'clock in the morning. Being tremendously impressed with the incident, I sat down and drew a page sketch of Lieutenants Melville and Coghall saving the colours from the Zulus. That picture was finished and sold to the Pictorial World before twelve o'clock that morning. Soon after this I became their special artist."

Some of Mr. Alfred Pearse's most brilliant work has been done for the Strand. Scarcely a number of that famous magazine can be opened without the characteristic initials, "A. P.," meeting the eye. He has also had a long and honourable connection with the Boy's Own Paper, and many grown men in all parts of the world remember him best by his illustrations to some of the famous serials by T. B. Reed and Gordon Stables.

Later in the afternoon I walked down with Mr. Pearse and Colbron Pearse to their studio, which is some hundred yards from the house. What a typical studio it is! It looks untidy, as all studios do, but its untidiness is its charm, and A. P. knows where everything is, so that the untidiness is apparent rather than real. It was a delight to turn over old sketch books, old prints, family relics, and the like. A. P. wanted me to put on the gloves and have a bout with him, but he squared up to me in such a workmanlike fashion that I preferred a cup of tea, so he sprinted into some unknown region where the eye could not follow him, brought the kettle back triumphantly, and set it upon the cheery blaze.

"You can tell the readers of The Captain," said A. P., "that my advice to the boys and girls is contained in my motto, 'Keep on Smiling.' Every day is not Christmas Day, and life is not all turkey and plum pudding. There are some days that are mighty dark and dreary, and some fare that is real 'hard tack,' but pluck and cheeriness—a firm resolve never to give in—and an almost omnipotent gift of cheerfulness—are splendid weapons to face the World with. So keep on smiling, boys, never say die, have a good bit of faith in yourselves—but do not show it too much—and remember this: A. P. wishes you all a merry Christmas, long life, and as much prosperity as you deserve—and a little more."

"The Captain" Photographic Gallery.

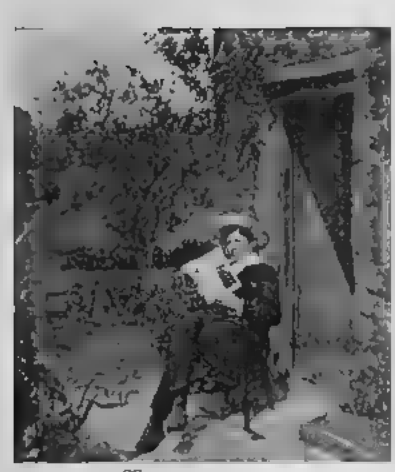
Being a Selection of photographs entered for our Competitions

A BICYCLE OBSTACLE RACE
By W. N. Bagshaw.

A NEWFOUNDLAND
By F. G. Goodman, Westcliff-on-Sea

A VERY FINE SNAPSHOT OF A BALLOON, ONE OF THREE THAT SET OUT TO RACE FROM THE BECKENHAM RECREATION GROUNDS THIS LAST SUMMER
By A. H. Mason, Beckenham

By G. Kay.] NETLEY ABBEY. [Kingsgate, Thanet.



THE 22ND OF THE MONTH
Percy H. Crockett

A MEMORY OF THE SUMMER
By Phyllis C. Young, Langland Bay

IN THE POOL.
H. G. Griffiths.

J. Gray. GIPSIES [Alloway, N.B.

By A. E. Radford.] RAMSEY HARBOUR. [Nottingham.

THE GOLD BAT

A PUBLIC SCHOOL STORY

BY P. G. WODEHOUSE
AUTHOR OF "THE POTHUNTERS" "THE MANŒUVRES OF CHARTERIS" ETC.

Illustrated by T. M. R. WHITWELL.

SYNOPSIS

The "gold bat" from which this story takes its title is a small ornament worn by Trevor, captain of the Wrykyn School XV., on his watch-chain. This bat Trevor has lent to O'Hara, an unruly Irishman, who, whilst employed on a midnight expedition whereof the object is tarring and feathering the Mayor of Wrykyn's statue, loses the little bat, and thereby fills Trevor with consternation for, should the bat be found near the scene of the outrage, Trevor sees that he will be placed in an exceedingly awkward position. About this time Trevor is experiencing some difficulty in filling the fifteenth place in his team. Rand-Brown, a big three-quarter in the Second XV., would seem to be the most likely selection, but he is observed to funk badly in a trial match, and so Trevor displaces him in favour of Barry, a smaller but far more reliable three-quarter who has hitherto played for the Third XV. Soon after this, the school learns that a mysterious League has been formed by a number of fellows unknown who intend to enforce their views and wishes by acts of violence. The League first wrecks the study of Mill, a prefect, and then proceeds to warn Trevor in an anonymous letter that its members do not desire Barry to continue to play for the First XV. Trevor disregards the letter and the "League" retaliates by mutilating his books, smashing his pictures, and turning his study upside down. Suspicion falls on Rand-Brown, but it is pointed out that he could not have wrecked the captain's room, at least, since he was in the field at the time the latter outrage was perpetrated. O'Hara determines to get to the bottom of the mystery, and first sets himself to find out where the League meets. In one part of the College there is a cellar-basement used for the storage of chairs. O'Hara secrets himself in this place one afternoon. After waiting some time he sees a light appear, and then a couple of dim forms. Plunging forward at a venture, he seizes one of the intruders and holds him tightly.

CHAPTER IX.

MAINLY ABOUT FERRETS.

"Ow!" exclaimed the captive, with no uncertain voice. "Let go, you ass, you're hurting."

The voice was a treble voice. This surprised O'Hara. It looked very much as if he had put up the wrong bird. From the dimensions of the arm which he was holding, his prisoner seemed to be of tender years.

"Let go, Harvey, you idiot. I shall kick."

Before the threat could be put into execution, O'Hara, who had been fumbling all this while in his pocket for a match, struck a light. The features of the owner of the arm he was still holding it—were lit up for a moment.

"Why, it's young Renford!" he exclaimed. "What are you doing down here?"

Renford, however, continued to pursue the topic of his arm, and the effect that the vice-like grip of the Irishman had had upon it.

"You've nearly broken it," he said, complainingly.

"I'm sorry. I mistook you for somebody else. Who's that with you?"

"It's me," said an ungrammatical voice.

"Who's me?"

"Harvey."

At this point a soft yellow light lit up the more immediate neighbourhood. Harvey had brought a bicycle lamp into action.

"That's more like it," said Renford. "Look here, O'Hara, you won't split, will you?"

"I'm not an informer by profession, thanks," said O'Hara.

"Oh, I know it's all right, really, but you can't be too careful. Because one isn't allowed down here, and there'd be a beastly row if it got out about our being down here."

"And *they* would be cobbed," put in Harvey.

"Who are they?" asked O'Hara.

"Ferrets. Like to have a look at them?"

"*Ferrets!*"

"Yes. Harvey brought back a couple at the beginning of term. Ripping little beasts. We couldn't keep them in the house, as they'd have got dropped on in a second, so we had to think of somewhere else, and thought why not keep them down here?"

"Why, indeed?" said O'Hara. "Do ye find they like it?"

"Oh, *they* don't mind," said Harvey. "We feed 'em twice a day. Once before breakfast—we take it in turns to get up early—and once directly after school. And on half-holidays and Sundays we take them out on to the downs."

"What for?"

"Why, rabbits, of course. Renford brought back a saloon-pistol with him. We keep it locked up in a box—don't tell any one."

"And what do ye do with the rabbits?"

"We pot at them as they come out of the holes."

"Yes, but when ye hit 'em?"

"Oh," said Renford, with some reluctance, "we haven't exactly hit any yet."

"We've got jolly near, though, lots of times," said Harvey. "Last Saturday I swear I wasn't more than a quarter of an inch off one of them. If it had been a decent-sized rabbit, I should have plugged it middle stump; only it was a small one, so I missed. But come and see them We keep 'em right at the other end of the place, in case anybody comes in."

"Have you ever seen anybody down here?" asked O'Hara.

"Once," said Renford. "Half-a-dozen chaps came down here once while we were feeding the ferrets. We waited till they'd got well in, then we nipped out quietly. They didn't see us."

"Did you see who they were?"

"No. It was too dark. Here they are. Rummy old crib this, isn't it? Look out for your shins on the chairs. Switch on the light, Harvey. There, aren't they rippers? Quite tame, too. They know us quite well. They know they're going to be fed, too. Hullo, Sir Nigel. This is Sir Nigel. Out of the 'White Company,' you know. Don't let him nip your fingers. This other one's Sherlock Holmes."

"Cats-s-s-s!!" said O'Hara. He had a sort of idea that was the right thing to say to any animal that could chase and bite.

Renford was delighted to be able to show his ferrets off to so distinguished a visitor.

"What were you down here about?" enquired Harvey, when the little animals had had their meal and had retired once more into private life.

O'Hara had expected this question, but he did not quite know what answer to give. Perhaps, on the whole, he thought, it would be best to tell them the real reason. If he refused to explain, their curiosity would be roused, which would be fatal. And to give any reason except the true one called for a display of impromptu invention of which he was not capable. Besides, they would not be likely to give away his secret while he held this one of theirs connected with the ferrets. He explained the situation briefly and swore them to silence on the subject.

Renford's comment was brief.

"Golly!" he observed.

Harvey went more deeply into the question.

"What makes you think they meet down here?" he asked.

"I saw some fellows cutting out of here last night. And you say ye've seen them here, too. I don't see what object they could have down here if they weren't the League holding a meeting. I don't see what else a chap would be after."

"He might be keeping ferrets," hazarded Renford.

"The whole school doesn't keep ferrets," said O'Hara. "You're unique in that way. No, it must be the League, an' I mean to wait here till they come."

"Not all night?" asked Harvey. He had a great respect for O'Hara, whose reputation in the school for out-of-the-way doings was considerable. In the bright lexicon of O'Hara he believed there to be no such word as "impossible."

"No," said O'Hara, "but till lock-up. You two had better out now."

"Yes, I think we'd better," said Harvey.

"And don't ye breathe a word about this to a soul"—a warning which extracted fervent promises of silence from both youths.

"This," said Harvey, as they emerged on to the gravel, "is something like. I'm jolly glad we're in it."

"Rather. Do you think O'Hara will catch them?"

"He must if he waits down there long enough. They're certain to come again. Don't you wish you'd been here when the League was on before?"

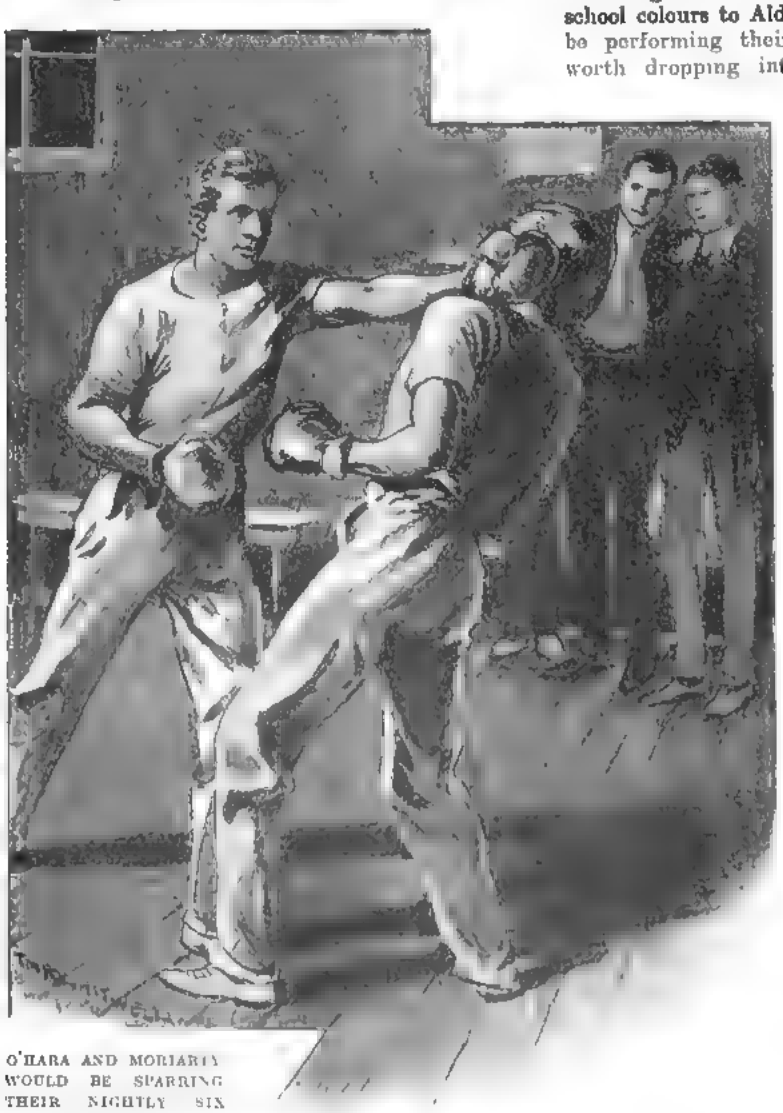
"I should think I did. Race you over to the shop. I want to get something before it shuts."

"Right O!" And they disappeared

O'Hara waited where he was till six struck from the clock-tower, followed by the sound of the bell as it rang for lock-up. Then he picked his way carefully through the groves of chairs, barking his shins now and then on their out-turned legs, and, pushing open the door, went out into the open air. It felt very fresh and pleasant after the brand of atmosphere supplied in the vault. He then ran over to the gymnasium to meet Moriarty, feeling a little disgusted at the lack of success that had attended his detective efforts up to the present. So far he had nothing to show for his trouble except a

good deal of dust on his clothes, and a dirty collar. But he was full of determination. He could play a waiting game.

It was a pity, as it happened, that O'Hara left the vault when he did. Five minutes after he had gone, six shadowy forms made their way silently and in single file through the doorway of the vault, which they closed carefully behind them. The fact that it was after lock-up was of small consequence. A good deal of latitude in that way was allowed at Wrykyn. It was the custom to go out, after the bell had sounded, to visit the gymnasium. In the winter and Easter terms the gymnasium became a sort of social club. People went there with a very small intention of doing gymnastics. They went to lounge about, talking to cronies, in front of the two huge stoves which warmed the place. Occasionally, as a concession to the look of the thing, they would do an easy exercise or two on the horse or parallels. But for the most part they preferred the *rôle* of spectator. There was plenty to see. In one corner O'Hara and Moriarty would be sparring their nightly six rounds (in two batches of three rounds each). In another, Drummond, who was going up to Aldershot as a feather-weight, would be putting in a little practice with the instructor. On the apparatus the members of the gymnastic six, including the two experts who were to carry the school colours to Aldershot in the spring, would be performing their usual marvels. It was worth dropping into the gymnasium of an evening. In no other place in the school were so many sights to be seen.



O'HARA AND MORIARTY WOULD BE SPARRING THEIR NIGHTLY SIX ROUNDS.

When you were surfeited with sight-seeing you went off to your house. And this was where the peculiar beauty of the gymnasium system came in. You went up to any master who happened to be there—there was always one at least—and observed in suave accents, "Please, sir, can I have a paper?" Whereupon he, taking a scrap of paper, would write upon it, "J. O. Jones (or A. B. Smith or C. D. Robinson) left gymnasium at such-and-such a time." And by presenting this to the menial who opened the door to you at your house, you went in rejoicing, and all was peace.

Now, there was no mention on the paper of the hour at which you *came* to the gymnasium—only of the hour at which you left. Consequently, certain lawless spirits would range the neighbourhood after lock-up, and, by putting in a quarter of an

hour at the gymnasium before returning to their houses, escape comment. To this class belonged the shadowy forms previously mentioned.

O'Hara had forgotten this custom, with the result that he was not at the vault when they arrived. Moriarty, to whom he confided between the rounds the substance of his evening's discoveries, reminded him of it.

"It's no good watching before lock-up," he said. "After six is the time they'll come, if they come at all."

"Bedad, ye're right," said O'Hara. "One of these nights we'll take a night off from boxing, and go and watch."

"Right," said Moriarty. "Are ye ready to go on?"

"Yes. I'm going to practise that left swing at the body this round. The one Fitzsimmons does." And they "put 'em up" once more.

CHAPTER X.

Being a Chapter of Accidents.

ON the evening following O'Hara's adventure in the vaults, Barry and McTodd were in their study, getting out the tea-things. Most Wrykynians brewed in the winter and Easter terms, when the days were short and lock-up early. In the summer term there were other things to do—nets, which lasted till a quarter to seven (when lock-up was), and the baths—and brewing practically ceased. But just now it was at its height, and every evening, at a quarter past five, there might be heard in the houses the sizzling of the succulent sausage and other rare delicacies. As a rule, one or two studies would club together to brew instead of preparing solitary banquets. This was found both more convivial and more economical. At Seymour's, studies numbers five, six, and seven had always combined from time immemorial, and Barry, on obtaining study six, had carried on the tradition. In study five were Drummond and his friend De Bertini. In study seven, which was a smaller room and only capable of holding one person with any comfort, one James Rupert Leather-Twigg (that was his singular name, as Mr. Gilbert has it), had taken up his abode. The name of Leather-Twigg having proved at an early date in his career too great a mouthful for Wrykyn, he was known to his friends and acquaintances by the euphonious title of Shoeblossom. The charm about the genial Shoeblossom was that you could never tell what he was going to do next. All that you could rely on with any certainty was that it would be something which would have been better left undone.

It was just five o'clock when Barry and McTodd started to get things ready. They were not high enough up in the school to have fags, so that they had to do this for themselves.

Barry was still in football clothes. He had been out running and passing with the first fifteen. McTodd, whose idea of exercise was winding up a watch, had been spending his time since school ceased in the study with a book. He was in his ordinary clothes. It was therefore fortunate that, when he upset the kettle (he nearly always did at some period of the evening's business), the contents spread themselves over Barry, and not over himself. Football clothes will stand any amount of water, whereas McTodd's "Youth's winter suiting at forty-two shillings and sixpence," might have been injured. Barry, however, did not look upon the episode in this philosophical light. He spoke to him eloquently for a while, and then sent him downstairs to fetch more water. While he was away Drummond and De Bertini came in.

"Hullo," said Drummond, "tea ready?"

"Not much," replied Barry, bitterly, "not likely to be, either, at this rate. We'd just got the kettle going when that ass McTodd plunged against the table and upset the lot over my bags. Lucky the beastly stuff wasn't boiling. I'm soaked."

"While we wait—the sausages—Yes?—a good idea—McTodd, he is downstairs—but to wait? No, no. Let us. Shall we? Is it not so? Yes?" observed Bertie, lucidly.

"Now construe," said Barry, looking at the linguist with a bewildered expression. It was a source of no little inconvenience to his friends that De Bertini was so very fixed in his determination to speak English. He was a trier all the way, was De Bertini. You rarely caught him helping out his remarks with the language of his native land. It was English or nothing with him. To most of his circle it might as well have been Zulu.

Drummond, either through natural genius or because he spent more time with him, was generally able to act as interpreter. Occasionally there would come a linguistic effort by which even he freely confessed himself baffled, and then they would pass on unsatisfied. But as a rule he was equal to the emergency. He was so now.

"What Bertie means," he explained, "is that it's no good us waiting for McTodd to come back. He never could fill a kettle in less than ten minutes, and even then he's certain to spill it coming upstairs and have to go back again. Let's get on with the sausages."

The pan had just been placed on the fire when

McTodd returned with the water. He tripped over the mat as he entered, and spilt about half a pint into one of his football boots, which stood inside the door, but the accident was comparatively trivial, and excited no remark.

"I wonder where that slacker Shoeblossom has got to," said Barry. "He never turns up in time to do any work. He seems to regard himself as a beastly guest. I wish we could finish the sausages before he comes. It would be a sell for him."

"Not much chance of that," said Drummond, who was kneeling before the fire and keeping an excited eye on the spluttering pan, "*you* see. He'll come just as we've finished cooking them. I believe the man waits outside with his ear to the keyhole. Hullo! Stand by with the plate. They'll be done in half a jiffy."

Just as the last sausage was deposited in safety on the plate, the door opened, and Shoeblossom, looking as if he had not brushed his hair since early childhood, sidled in with an attempt at an easy nonchalance which was rendered quite impossible by the hopeless state of his conscience.

"Ah," he said, "brewing, I see. Can I be of any use?"

"We've finished years ago," said Barry.

"Ages ago," said McTodd.

A look of intense alarm appeared on Shoeblossom's classical features.

"You've not finished, really?"

"We've finished cooking everything," said Drummond. "We haven't begun tea yet. Now are you happy?"

Shoeblossom was. So happy that he felt he must do something to celebrate the occasion. He felt like a successful general. There must be *something* he could do to show that he regarded the situation with approval. He looked round the study. Ha! Happy thought—the frying-pan. That useful culinary instrument was lying in the fender, still bearing its cargo of fat, and beside it—a sight to stir the blood and make the heart beat faster—were the sausages, piled up on their plate.

Shoeblossom stooped. He seized the frying-pan. He gave it one twirl in the air. Then, before any one could stop him, he had turned it upside down over the fire. As has been already remarked, you could never predict exactly what James Rupert Leather-Twigg would be up to next.

When anything goes out of the frying-pan into the fire, it is usually productive of interesting by-products. The maxim applies to fat. The fat was in the fire with a vengeance. A great sheet of flame rushed out and up. Shoeblossom leaped back with a readiness highly creditable in one who was not a professional acrobat. The covering of the mantelpiece caught fire. The flames went roaring up the chimney.

Drummond, cool while everything else was so hot, without a word moved to the mantelpiece to beat out the fire with a football shirt. Bertie was talking rapidly to himself in English. Nobody could understand what he was saying, which was possibly fortunate.

By the time Drummond had extinguished the mantelpiece, Barry had also done good work by knocking the fire into the grate with the poker. McTodd, who had been standing up till now in the far corner of the room gaping vaguely at things in general, now came into action. Probably it was force of habit that suggested to him that the time had come to upset the kettle. At any rate, upset it he did—most of it over the glowing, blazing mass in the grate, the rest over Barry. One of the largest and most detestable smells the study had ever had to endure instantly assailed their nostrils. The fire in the study was out now, but in the chimney it still blazed merrily.

"Go up on to the roof and heave water down," said Drummond, the strategist. "You can get out from Milton's dormitory window. And take care not to chuck it down the wrong chimney."

Barry was starting for the door to carry out these excellent instructions, when it flew open.

"Pah! *What* have you boys been doing? What an abominable smell. Pah!" said a muffled voice. It was Mr. Seymour. Most of his face was concealed in a large handkerchief, but by the look of his eyes, which appeared above, he did not seem pleased. He took in the situation at a glance. Fires in the house were not rarities. One facetious sportsman had once made a rule of setting the senior day-room chimney on fire every term. He had since left (by request), but fires still occurred.

"Is the chimney on fire?"

"Yes, sir," said Drummond.

"Go and find Herbert, and tell him to take some water on to the roof and throw it down." Herbert was the boot and knife cleaner at Seymour's.

Barry went. Soon afterwards a splash of water in the grate announced that the intrepid Herbert was hard at it. Another followed, and another. Then there was a pause. Mr. Seymour thought he would look up to see if the fire was out. He stooped and peered into the darkness, and, even as he gazed, splash came the contents of the fourth pail, together with some soot with which they had formed a

HE HAD TURNED IT UPSIDE DOWN OVER THE FIRE

travelling acquaintance on the way down. Mr. Seymour staggered back, grimy and dripping There was dead silence in the study. Shoeblossom's face might have been seen working convulsively.

The silence was broken by a hollow, sepulchral voice with a strong Cockney accent.

"Did yer see any water come down then, sir?" said the voice.

Shoeblossom collapsed into a chair, and began to sob feebly.

* * * * * * *

"—disgraceful . . . scandalous . . . get *up*, Leather-Twigg . . . not to be trusted . . . *babies* . . . three hundred lines, Leather-Twigg. . . . abominable . . . surprised . . . ought to be ashamed of yourselves . . . *double*, Leather-Twigg . . . not fit to have studies . . . atrocious . . ."

Such were the main heads of Mr. Seymour's speech on the situation as he dabbed desperately at the soot on his face with his handkerchief. Shoeblossom stood and gurgled throughout. Not even the thought of six hundred lines could quench that dauntless spirit.

"Finally," perorated Mr. Seymour, as he was leaving the room," as you are evidently not to be trusted with rooms of your own, I forbid you to enter them till further notice. It is disgraceful that such a thing should happen. Do you hear, Barry? And you, Drummond? You are not to enter your studies again till I give you leave. Move your books down to the senior day-room to-night."

And Mr. Seymour stalked off to clean himself.

CHAPTER XI.

The House Matches.

IT was something of a consolation to Barry and his friends—at any rate, to Barry and Drummond—that directly after they had been evicted from their study, the house-matches began. Except for the Ripton match the house-matches were the most important event of the Easter term. Even the sports at the beginning of April were productive of less excitement. There were twelve houses at Wrykyn, and they played on the "knocking-out" system. To be beaten once meant that a house was no longer eligible for the competition. It could play "friendlies" as much as it liked, but, play it never so wisely, it could not lift the cup. Thus it often happened that a weak house, by fluking a victory over a strong rival, found itself, much to its surprise, in the semi-final, or sometimes even in the final. This was rarer at football than at cricket, for at football the better team generally wins.

The favourites this year were Donaldson's, though some fancied Seymour's. Donaldson's had Trevor, whose leadership was worth almost more than his play. In no other house was training so rigid. You could tell a Donaldson's man, if he was in his house-team, at a glance. If you saw a man eating oatmeal biscuits in the shop, and eyeing wistfully the while the stacks of buns and pastry, you could put him down as a Donaldsonite without further evidence. The captains of the other houses used to prescribe a certain amount of self-abnegation in the matter of food, but Trevor left his men barely enough to support life—enough, that is, of the things that are really worth eating. The consequence was that Donaldson's would turn out for an important match all muscle and bone, and on such occasions it was bad for those of their opponents who had been taking life more easily. Besides Trevor they had Clowes, and had had bad luck in not having Paget. Had Paget stopped, no other house could have looked at them. But by his departure the strength of the team had become more nearly on a level with that of Seymour's.

Some even thought that Seymour's were the stronger. Milton was as good a forward as the school possessed. Besides him there were Barry and Rand-Brown on the wings. Drummond was a useful half, and five of the pack had either first or second fifteen colours. It was a team that would take some beating.

Trevor came to that conclusion early. "If we can beat Seymour's, we'll lift the cup," he said to Clowes.

"We'll have to do all we know," was Clowes' reply.

They were watching Seymour's pile up an immense score against a scratch team got up by one of the masters. The first round of the competition was over. Donaldson's had beaten Templar's, Seymour's the School House. Templar's were rather stronger than the School House, and Donaldson's had beaten them by a rather larger score than that which Seymour's had run up in their match. But neither Trevor nor Clowes was inclined to draw any augury from this. Seymour's had taken things easily after half-time; Donaldson's had kept going hard all through.

"That makes Rand-Brown's fourth try," said Clowes, as the wing three-quarter of the second fifteen raced round and scored in the corner.

"Yes. This is the sort of game he's all right in. The man who's marking him is no good. Barry's scored twice, and both good tries, too."

"Oh, there's no doubt which is the best man," said Clowes. "I only mentioned that it was Rand-Brown's fourth as an item of interest."

The game continued. Barry scored a third try.

"We're drawn against Appleby's next round," said Trevor. "We can manage them all right."

"When is it?"

"Next Thursday. Nomads' match on Saturday. Then Ripton, Saturday week."

"Who've Seymour's drawn?"

"Day's. It'll be a good game, too. Seymour's ought to win, but they'll have to play their best. Day's have got some good men."

"Fine scrum," said Clowes.

"Yes. Quick in the open, too, which is always good business. I wish they'd beat Seymour's."

"Oh, we ought to be all right, whichever wins."

Appleby's did not offer any very serious resistance to the Donaldson attack. They were outplayed at every point of the game, and before half-time Donaldson's had scored their thirty points. It was a rule in all in-school matches—and a good rule, too—that, when one side led by thirty points, the match stopped. This prevented those massacres which do so much towards crushing all the football out of the members of the beaten team. And it kept the winning team from getting slack by urging them on to score their thirty points before half-time. There were some houses—notoriously slack—which would go for a couple of seasons without ever playing the second half of a match.

Having polished off the men of Appleby, the Donaldson team trooped off to the other game to see how Seymour's were getting on with Day's. It was evidently an exciting match. The first half had been played to the accompaniment of much shouting from the ropes. Though coming so early in the competition, it was really the semi-final, for whichever team won would be almost certain to get into the final. The school had turned up in large numbers to watch.

"Seymour's looking tired of life," said Clowes. "That would seem as if his fellows weren't doing well."

"What's been happening here?" asked Trevor of an enthusiast in a Seymour's house cap whose face was crimson with yelling.

"One goal all," replied the enthusiast huskily. "Did you beat Appleby's?"

"Yes. Thirty points before half-time. Who's been doing the scoring here?"

"Milton got in for us. He barged through out of touch. We've been pressing the whole time. Barry got over once, but he was held up. Hullo, they're beginning again. Buck up, Sey-*mour's*."

His voice cracking on the high note, he took an immense slab of vanilla chocolate as a remedy for hoarseness.

"Who scored for Day's?" asked Clowes.

"Strachan. Rand-Brown let him through from their twenty-five. You never saw anything so rotten as Rand-Brown. He doesn't take his passes, and Strachan gets past him every time."

"Is Strachan playing on the wing?"

Strachan was the first fifteen full back.

"Yes. They've put young Bassett back instead of him. Sey-*mour's*. Buck up, Seymour's We-ell played! There, did you ever see anything like it?" he broke off disgustedly.

The Seymourite playing centre next to Rand-Brown had run through to the back and passed out to his wing, as a good centre should. It was a perfect pass except that it came at his head instead of his chest. Nobody with any pretensions to decent play should have missed it. Rand-Brown, however, achieved that feat. The ball struck his hands and bounded forward. The referee blew his whistle for a scrum, and a certain try was lost.

From the scrum the Seymour's forwards broke away to the goal-line, where they were pulled up by Bassett. The next minute the defence had been pierced, and Drummond was lying on the ball a yard across the line. The enthusiast standing by Clowes expended the last relics of his voice in commemorating the fact that his side had the lead.

"Drummond'll be good next year," said Trevor. And he made a mental note to tell Allardyce, who would succeed him in the command of the school football, to keep an eye on the player in question.

The triumph of the Seymourites was not long-lived. Milton failed to convert Drummond's try. From the drop-out from the twenty-five line Barry got the ball, and punted into touch. The throw-out was not straight, and a scrum was formed. The ball came out to the Day's halves, and went across to Strachan. Rand-Brown hesitated, and then made a futile spring at the first fifteen man's neck. Strachan handed him off easily, and ran. The Seymour's full-back, who was a poor player, failed to get across in time. Strachan ran round behind the posts, the kick succeeded, and Day's now led by two points.

After this the game continued in Day's half. Five minutes before time was up Drummond got the ball from a scrum nearly on the line, passed in to Barry on the wing instead of opening up the game by passing to his centres, and Barry slipped through in the corner. This put

Seymour's just one point ahead, and there they stayed till the whistle blew for no-side.

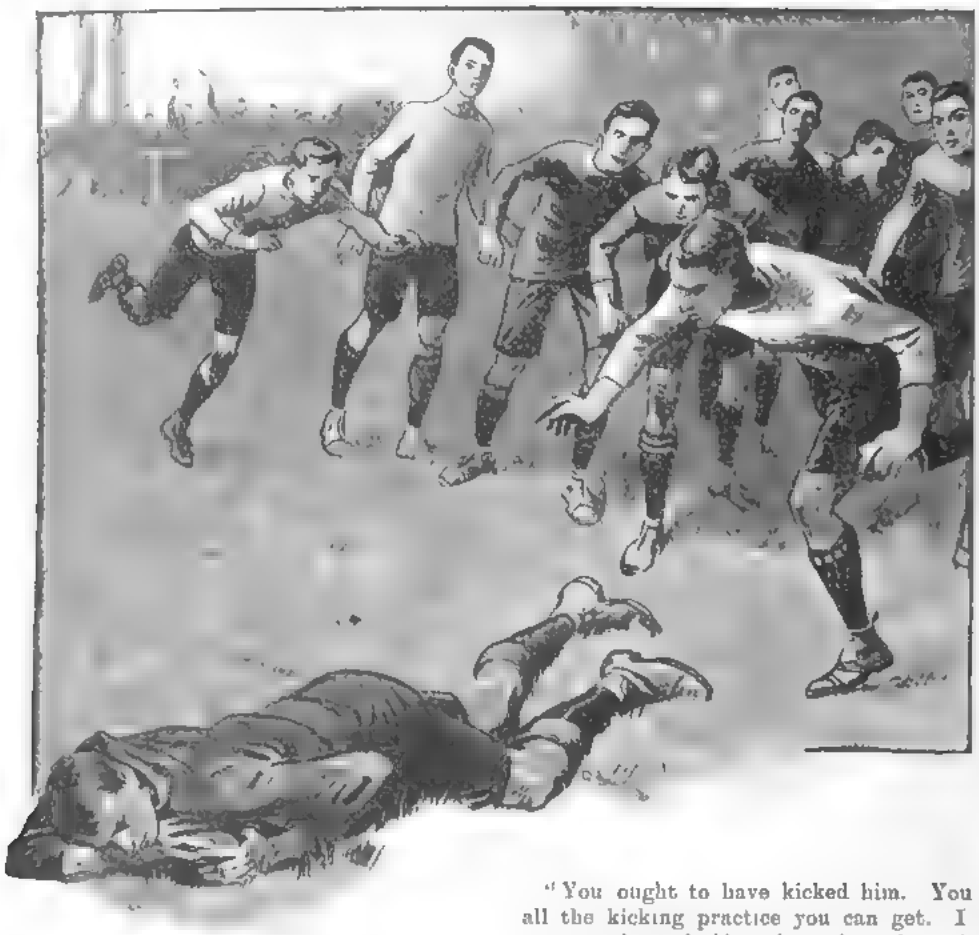
Milton walked over to the boarding-houses with Clowes and Trevor. He was full of the match, particularly of the iniquity of Rand-Brown.

"I slanged him on the field," he said. "It's a thing I don't often do, but what else *can* you do when a man plays like that? He lost us three certain tries."

his form. It was rather cheap, but I felt so frightfully sick about it. It's sickening to be let down like that when you've been pressing the whole time, and ought to be scoring every other minute."

"What had he to say on the subject?" asked Clowes.

"Oh, he gassed a bit until I told him I'd kick him if he said another word. That shut him up."



DRUMMOND WAS LYING ON THE BALL A YARD ACROSS THE LINE.

"When did you administer your rebuke?" enquired Clowes.

"When he had let Strachan through that second time, in the second half. I asked him why on earth he tried to play footer at all. I told him a good kiss-in-the-ring club was about

"You ought to have kicked him. You want all the kicking practice you can get. I never saw anything feebler than that shot of yours after Drummond's try."

"I'd like to see *you* take a kick like that. It was nearly on the touchline. Still, when we play you, we sha'n't need to convert any of our tries. We'll get our thirty points without that. Perhaps you'd like to scratch?"

"As a matter of fact," said Clowes confidentially, "I am going to score seven tries off my own bat against you. You'll be sorry you ever turned out when we've finished with you."

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CHAPTER XII.

News of the Gold Bat.

SHOEBLOSSOM sat disconsolately on the table in the senior day-room. He was not happy in exile. Brewing in the senior day-room was a mere vulgar brawl, lacking all the refining influences of the study. You had to fight for a place at the fire, and when you had got it 'twas not always easy to keep it. And there was no privacy. And the fellows were always bear-fighting, so that it was impossible to read a book quietly for ten consecutive minutes without some ass heaving a cushion at you or turning out the gas. Altogether Shoeblossom yearned for the peace of his study, and wished earnestly that Mr. Seymour would withdraw the order of banishment. It was the not being able to read that he objected to chiefly. In place of brewing, the ex-proprietors of studies five, six, and seven, now made a practice of going to the school shop. It was more expensive and not nearly so comfortable —there is a romance about a study brew which you can never get anywhere else—but it served, and it was not on this score that he grumbled most. What he hated was having to live in a bear-garden. For Shoeblossom was a man of moods. Give him two or three congenial spirits to back him up, and he would lead the revels with the *abandon* of a Mr. Bultitude (after his return to his original form). But he liked to choose his accomplices, and the gay sparks of the senior day-room did not appeal to him. They were not intellectual enough. In his lucid intervals he was accustomed to be almost abnormally solemn and respectable. When not promoting some unholy rag, Shoeblossom resembled an elderly gentleman of studious habits. He liked to sit in a comfortable chair, and read a book. It was the impossibility of doing this in the senior day-room that led him to try and think of some other haven where he might rest. Had it been summer, he would have taken some literature out on to the cricket-field or the downs, and put in a little steady reading there, with the aid of a bag of cherries. But with the thermometer low, that was impossible.

He felt very lonely and dismal. He was not a man with many friends. In fact, Barry and the other three were almost the only members of the house with whom he was on speaking-terms. And of these four he saw very little. Drummond and Barry were always out of doors or over at the gymnasium, and as for McTodd and De Bertini, it was not worth while talking to the one, and impossible to talk to the other. No wonder Shoeblossom felt dull. Once Barry and Drummond had taken him over to the gymnasium with them, but this had bored him worse than ever. They had been hard at it all the time—for, unlike a good many of the school, they went to the gymnasium for business, not to lounge—and he had had to sit about watching them. And watching gymnastics was one of the things he most loathed. Since then he had refused to go.

That night matters came to a head. Just as he had settled down to read, somebody, in flinging a cushion across the room, brought down the gas apparatus with a run, and before light was once more restored it was tea-time. After that there was preparation, which lasted for two hours, and by the time he had to go to bed he had not been able to read a single page of the enthralling work with which he was at present occupied.

He had just got into bed when he was struck with a brilliant idea. Why waste the precious hours in sleep? What was that saying of somebody's, "Five hours for a wise man, six for somebody else—he forgot who—eight for a fool, nine for an idiot," or words to that effect? Five hours sleep would mean that he need not go to bed till half-past two. In the meanwhile he could be finding out exactly what the hero *did* do when he found out (to his horror) that it was his cousin Jasper who had really killed the old gentleman in the wood. The only question was —how was he to do his reading? Prefects were allowed to work on after lights out in their dormitories by the aid of a candle, but to the ordinary mortal this was forbidden.

Then he was struck with another brilliant idea. It is a curious thing about ideas. You do not get one for over a month, and then there comes a rush of them, all brilliant. Why, he thought, should he not go and read in his study with a dark lantern? He had a dark lantern. It was one of the things he had found lying about at home on the last day of the holidays, and had brought with him to school. It was his custom to go about the house just before the holidays ended, snapping up unconsidered trifles which might or might not come in useful. This term he had brought back a curious metal vase (which looked Indian, but which had probably been made in Birmingham the year before last), two old coins (of no mortal use to anybody in the world, including himself), and the dark lantern. It was reposing now in the cupboard in his study nearest the window.

He had brought his book up with him on coming to bed, on the chance that he might have time to read a page or two if he woke up early. (He had always been doubtful about that man Jasper. For one thing he had been seen pawning

the old gentleman's watch on the afternoon of the murder, which was a suspicious circumstance, and then he was not a nice character at all, and just the sort of man who would be likely to murder old gentlemen in woods.) He waited till Mr. Seymour had paid his nightly visit—he went the round of the dormitories at about eleven—and then he chuckled gently. If Mill, the dormitory prefect, was awake, the chuckle would make him speak, for Mill was of a suspicious nature, and believed that it was only his unintermitted vigilance which prevented the dormitory ragging all night.

SHOEBLOSSOM STOOD AND QUAKED BEHIND THE DOOR.

Mill *was* awake.

"Be quiet, there," he growled. "Shut up that noise"

Shoeblossom felt that the time was not yet ripe for his departure. Half an hour later he tried again. There was no rebuke. To make certain he emitted a second chuckle, replete with sinister meaning. A slight snore came from the direction of Mill's bed. Shoeblossom crept out of the room, and hurried to his study. The door was not locked, for Mr. Seymour had relied on his commands being sufficient to keep the owner out of it. He slipped in, found and lit the dark lantern, and settled down to read. He read with feverish excitement. The thing was, you see, that though Claud Trevelyan (that was the hero) knew jolly well that it was Jasper who had done the murder, the police didn't, and, as he (Claud) was too noble to tell them, he had himself been arrested on suspicion. Shoeblossom was skimming through the pages with starting eyes when suddenly his attention was taken from his book by a sound. It was a footstep. Somebody was coming down the passage, and under the door filtered a thin stream of light. To snap the dark slide over the lantern and dart to the door, so that if it opened he would be behind it, was with him, as Mr. Claud Trevelyan might have remarked, the work of a moment. He heard the door of study number five flung open, and then the footsteps passed on, and stopped opposite his own den. The handle turned, and the light of a candle flashed into the room, to be extinguished instantly as the draught of the moving door caught it

Shoeblossom heard his visitor utter an exclamation of annoyance, and fumble in his pocket for matches. He recognised the voice. It was Mr. Seymour's. The fact was that Mr. Seymour had had the same experience as General Stanley in *The Pirates of Penzance*:—

"The man who finds his conscience ache,
No peace at all enjoys.
And, as I lay in bed awake,
I thought I heard a noise."

Whether Mr. Seymour's conscience ached or not, cannot, of course, be discovered. But he had certainly thought he heard a noise, and he had come to investigate.

The search for matches had so far proved fruitless. Shoeblossom stood and quaked behind the door. The reek of hot tin from the dark lantern grew worse momentarily. Mr. Seymour sniffed several times, until Shoeblossom thought that he must be discovered. Then, to his immense relief, the master walked away. Shoeblossom's chance had come. Mr. Seymour had probably gone to get some matches to relight his candle. It was far from likely that the episode was closed. He would be back again presently. If Shoeblossom was going to escape he must do it now, so he waited till the footsteps had passed away and then darted out in the direction of his dormitory.

As he was passing Milton's study, a white figure glided out of it. All that he had ever read or heard of spectres rushed into Shoeblossom's petrified brain. He wished he was safely in bed. He wished he had never come out of it. He wished he had led a better and nobler life. He wished he had never been born.

The figure passed quite close to him as he stood glued against the wall, and he saw it disappear into the dormitory opposite his own, of which Rigby was prefect. He blushed hotly at the thought of the fright he had been in. It was only somebody playing the same game as himself.

He jumped into bed and lay down, having first plunged the lantern bodily into his jug to extinguish it. Its indignant hiss had scarcely died away when Mr. Seymour appeared at the door. It had occurred to Mr. Seymour that he had smelt something very out of the ordinary in Shoeblossom's study, a smell uncommonly like that of hot tin. And a suspicion dawned on him that Shoeblossom had been in there with a dark lantern. He had come to the dormitory to confirm his suspicions. But a glance showed him how unjust they had been. There was Shoeblossom, fast asleep. Mr. Seymour therefore followed the excellent example of my Lord Tomnoddy on a celebrated occasion, and went off to bed.

It was the custom for the captain of football at Wrykyn to select and publish the team for the Ripton match a week before the day on which it was to be played. On the evening after the Nomads' match, Trevor was sitting in his study writing out the names, when there came a knock at the door, and his fag entered with a letter.

"This has just come, Trevor," he said.

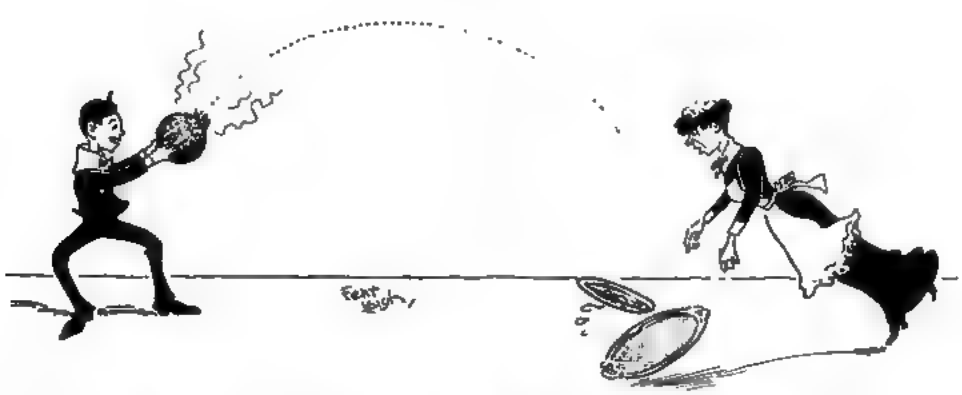
"All right. Put it down."

The fag left the room. Trevor picked up the letter. The handwriting was strange to him. The words had been printed. Then it flashed upon him that he had received a letter once before addressed in the same way—the letter from the League about Barry. Was this, too, from that address? He opened it.

It was.

He read it, and gasped. The worst had happened. The gold bat was in the hands of the enemy.

(To be continued.)



AN OPENING FOR PLAY.

When Mary slips with the Christmas pudding, an experienced goalkeeper comes in mighty handy.

By Felix Leigh.

POOR, DEAR HARRY!

A REAL SCHOOL STORY.

By Guy N. Pocock. Illustrated by Gordon Browne, R.I.

"Poor, dear Harry" is a new boy, who, before coming to school, has been reading a lot of school tales in which the Hero is always very long-suffering, and the Bully a most atrocious character. Arrived at school, Harry, to the bewilderment and amusement of his fellows, insists on assuming the *rôle* of "Hero," and proceeds to "rescue from drowning" a boy who is splashing about quite safely in shallow water—much to the rescued one's amazement and discomfort.

VI.

THE next day was a half holiday, and Jenkins, surrounded by a little crowd of admirers, was making the most of the fifteen minutes before cricket in perfecting a real fountain which he had constructed out of paper, glass-tubing, and a tin of water, at a higher level. He had set the fashion for inventing, but though the juniors racked their brains to think of something original, they one by one came to the conclusion that everything had been invented already, and returned to watch the resourceful Jenkins. Frost, looking very important, was making out the game for the approval of the games master, while Tommy and Harvey were fishing for blotting-paper in the ink-pots and talking in a low voice.

"Come here, Jinks," said Tommy at last, rising and seizing Jenkins by the scruff of the neck, "we want to talk to you."

Jenkins turned off the tap of his fountain and joined the fishing party.

"You know all about the new thing," said Tommy. "Is it safe, do you think?"

Jenkins laughed. "It's quite harmless," he said.

"Yes, but does it want its head put under the tap?" suggested Harvey.

"Don't think so," said Jenkins, musingly. "It imagines it's the Hero of a school story—that's all."

"Oh, *that's* what it is?" they both exclaimed.

"Yes," said the penetrating youngster, "that's all. I wonder if it plays cricket?"

"Let's ask Frost," said Harvey, and the three crossed over to consult the captain.

Frost shrugged his shoulders in reply.

"Come here you—er—what's-your-name!" he called to Harry, who was reading pensively in the window-seat. He rose and came towards them, still reading.

"Play cricket at all?" asked Frost.

"I *don't*, but I *can*," said Harry, confidently.

Harvey looked at Tommy and solemnly shut one eye.

"H'm! have you never played?" asked Frost.

"Never," was the reply.

"Ever held a bat?"

"Never."

"Then how on—what makes you think you can play?"

"All Her——" Harry was beginning, but he checked himself. "I have that power," he said.

Frost looked a little bewildered. "You'd better come to the third net as soon as you're changed," he said, imperatively.

"I'm not playing this afternoon," said Harry, assuming the smile that had so exasperated Frost on a former occasion.

Frost's eye-brows flew up, but Harvey swiftly and diplomatically trod on his toe; it would have been a pity to spoil things so soon. Feeling that he was not good at this game of words, Frost resigned his place to Harvey.

"When are you going to play for us?" asked Harvey, with a grin which was intended for a bewitching smile.

"I don't mind playing for you against the County," said Harry simply, closing his eyes and lifting his eyebrows.

Jenkins squeaked and dived under a desk-lid.

"Thanks very much," said Harvey, quite gravely, "but we haven't an engagement with the County this season. Perhaps you'd help us against St. Andrews?"

"I don't mind," said Harry, modestly twiddling his thumbs.

"Beastly good of you," cried Frost, unable to contain himself any longer; "anyhow, you've got to change now and come to the third net."

"I am not playing to-day," Harry repeated, tightening his lips.

But at this moment the games master entered the play-room. "All change now," he said; "Frost, let me see your game. All new boys are to go to the nets."

"I'll obey *you*, sir," said Harry, with great dignity.

"Of course you will!" said the master, with a laugh. "How are the new boys settling down, Frost?" he said, as he walked away.

"All right, except that one, sir," said Frost, "and he's rather—rather maddish."

The master laughed. "Let him down gently, Frost," he said; "he'll be all right in a week."

There was a general move towards the changing rooms.

"What's that muff's name?" asked Harry, as they entered.

"That who?" asked Harvey.

"That muff," repeated the new boy, with emphasis.

"Do you mean Frost?" Harvey inquired, with a suppressed chuckle.

"Ah, yes, Frost," he said; "a dreadful muff, I'm afraid." And he walked to his place shaking his head. But he paused as he passed Jenkins. "I'm out of Coventry!" he whispered, with a delighted smile.

In the bright glare of the sun the cricket-ground shone in long alternate stripes that betokened careful rolling. As one listened to the familiar cricket-sounds, the steady "clop, clop," of bats, the quivering swish of balls striking the nets, the loud voices of the coaches, and the repeated far-off cry of "Thank you, b-a-a-ll!" it seemed as though summer had returned in a single rush. In the cool delicious grass behind the nets a few juniors were chasing little black-and-yellow dragon-flies and diminutive frogs; while Frost and Harvey strode up and down from net to net, pausing a moment or two behind each player, and speculating on the prospects for the term.

"That was a pretty stroke!" said Harvey, in an undertone, "that kid shapes awfully well, don't he?"

"Yes," replied Frost, as they moved on; "I've been noticing his play; much the best sportsman of the new kids. 'Dennis,' isn't he? I shall probably—Great Scott! what's that?" as he tripped over something in the long grass and nearly fell. It was Harry, lying with his chin upon his hands, engrossed, as usual, in his book.

"What on earth do you think you're doing here?" cried Frost, who was getting tired of this strange creature's antics.

Harry rolled over on to his back and smiled. "I feel just lovely!" he exclaimed.

"Dessay you do!" growled the unimaginative Frost, "and you'll feel just lovelier still if you don't go and get your pads on in about a quarter of a second!"

"Is that what the master meant?" asked Harry, placing his hands under his head.

"Yes, and *I* mean it, too," said Frost.

"I'll obey *him*," said Harry, rising and putting his book into his blazer pocket. "But I don't obey molly-coddles!" he added, turning round some seconds later. It had taken him some time to prepare that sentence.

"A thing like that oughtn't to be allowed to live," growled Frost. "Just look at it—did you ever see such side?"

Harry certainly did look a little self-conscious as he entered the net, drawing on his batting gloves and eyeing the block with the air of a first-class batsman.

"Centre!" he cried, placing his left hand on his hip, and supporting the bat with his right fore-finger.

"Play!" he shouted, after thumping the ground for some minutes. A master strolled to the net and, after showing Harry how to stand, bowled him a slow and easy lob. Harry rushed out to meet it, uttering a little scream, swung the bat round his head, caught the ball fairly, and sent it hurtling skywards. There was an excited cry of "Heads!" from all sides, and every one instinctively crouched with his hands over the back of his neck till the ball landed with a thud in the midst of the bowlers.

"That was a good stroke," said Harry, walking jauntily back to the block.

"An exceedingly bad one, you mean," said the master good-humouredly; and he proceeded to coach him with the rest.

Frost won the toss and sent in the next XV. Wickets fell in rapid succession, none of the juniors being able to reach double figures against the bowling of Tommy and

the new boy Dennis, except Jenkins, who had compiled a cautious twenty-three when the twelfth wicket fell.

"Man in!" cried the master, who was umpiring.

"You're in now!" called Howell from the scorer's bench to Harry.

The new boy started up and unstrapped his pads.

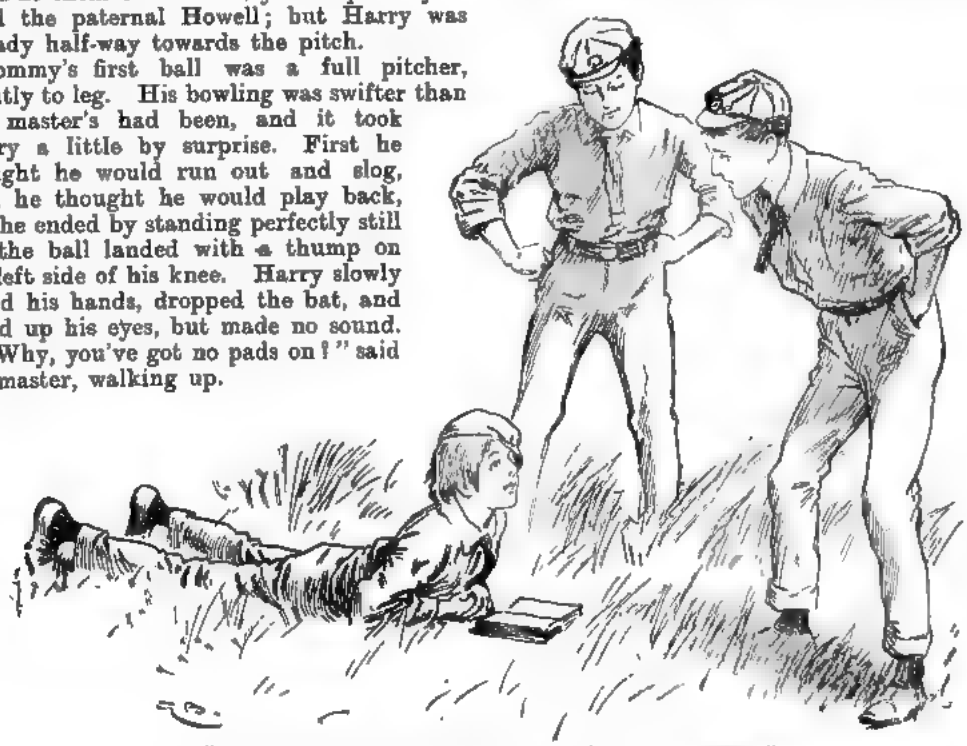
"What are you doing that for?" asked Howell. "You want them on now!"

"I bat without pads," said Harry, with a haughty look.

"Put them on at once, you stupid boy!" cried the paternal Howell; but Harry was already half-way towards the pitch.

Tommy's first ball was a full pitcher, slightly to leg. His bowling was swifter than the master's had been, and it took Harry a little by surprise. First he thought he would run out and slog, then he thought he would play back, and he ended by standing perfectly still till the ball landed with a thump on the left side of his knee. Harry slowly raised his hands, dropped the bat, and rolled up his eyes, but made no sound.

"Why, you've got no pads on?" said the master, walking up.



"WHAT ON EARTH DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING HERE?"

"No," said Harry, heroically, "I play without."

"Run and get them on at once!"

Having obeyed this order, Harry ran out and struck at the next three balls with a little scream, but each time they whizzed past him in a quite unaccountable manner. The fourth, however, landed square on his bat. Harry shut his eyes and pulled, and when he opened them again the ball was in the wicket-keeper's hand, and he was pronounced "Out."

"That's not out!" cried Harry, indignantly.

"Out," repeated the umpire.

"But," objected Harry, "I *know* I hit——"

"OUT!" interrupted the umpire, emphatically.

Harry went out whispering "Muff!" to relieve his feelings. He removed his pads contemptuously and strolled as near as he could to watch the last wicket fall. Jenkins had got his eye in, and was playing well. Twice he had cut the ball so neatly that the master had called "Well played!" and Jenkins tingled with delight. Then a beautiful full-pitcher came soaring to leg, and Jenkins caught it fairly. Harry drew a deep breath, for the ball was falling, falling directly to where he stood. He knew what he must do. He clenched his teeth and raised his hands. "Long-leg" was running straight towards him, but Harry turned him aside with his shoulder, and a second later his fingers clutched and—oh, joy!—*held* the ball. Harry screamed with delight, and set off towards the school at a steady run, holding the ball above his head with both hands.

"Hi!" "Stop!" "What are you doing, you idiot?" "Bring that ball back!" The

whole field shrieked at him, but Harry heard nothing. He had saved the match, and was running to tell the matron; here was the ball to prove it!

A moment later half the school were flying after him across the field. The junior games stopped from sheer amazement, and there was silence even at the nets.

"Drop it, you ass!" shouted Drury, seizing Harry by the wrist just as he was entering the play-ground, and wrenching the ball from his grasp.

"Why, do you want it?" asked Harry, in surprise.

"Want it?" cried Drury, furiously, "don't you see you're ragging the whole game? You don't seem to know what an ass you're making of yourself!"

"Well, I saved the match," Harry protested.

"Oh! punch his head," suggested some one in the crowd that had now gathered.

"Put him under the tap," suggested another.

"Come along, quick!" called the master from the pitch; and the eleven ran back to their places, leaving Harry somewhat bewildered, but not a whit crestfallen. The fourteenth wicket fell, and Jenkins, who carried his bat for a respectable 32, was greeted on all sides with "Bravo, Jinx! Well played, Jingo!" till he had to throw pads at everybody to make them shut up.

It was still too early in May for the warmth to last, and the school adjourned to the gymnasium, leaving the match for the following Saturday to decide.

VII.

THE school had now settled down into the usual swing of work and play and eating and sleeping, and Harry, who had shown himself a distinctly clever boy, was placed in the second form, where he rapidly rose towards the top. He was conscientious to an extraordinary degree, rarely answering a question if he considered that some one below him "deserved" to go up.

If ever the master asked "Who was that talking?" Harry would blush violently, and, when questioned, would never deny the charge for fear of getting the real offender into trouble. So that, when the culprit "owned up," as often as not they were both punished.

Saturday came, and the match was finished, the result being an overwhelming victory for the XI. Harry did not often touch the ball, but he had rushed across the pitch with surprising energy every time "Over" was called.

Tea was over, and the school was disporting itself in the playroom, while upstairs in the bath-room the barber with the long wavy hair was half-way through his three hours' performance of clipping and brushing and chattering. Harry had arranged three desks into the form of an arm-chair, and was gazing rapturously at the line of distant trees that stood out black and mazy against an enormous red sun and a beautiful sunset sky.

"Jones minor! your hair-cutting!" sang out Jenkins, entering the room with his hair cropped short like a convict's.

"Don't let any one bag my place!" cried Jones minor, leaving his game and darting upstairs.

"Come here, Jinks! we want you!" cried half-a-dozen boys who were sprawling on the table over a pack of cards. "How do you do this thing?"

Jenkins lay on the table and gazed at the puzzle thoughtfully while the boys glanced at each other and smiled, for even the thoughtful Howell had not made it out yet, though he had taken it to a corner to puzzle over.

"I see it!" cried Jenkins, breaking the silence. "I'll get my cards and show you!" and off he ran to his locker by the window.

"Jenkins!" said Harry, who was watching the sunset fainting from orange to crimson, and from crimson to purple.

"Well?" said Jenkins, groping in his locker.

"Are you likely to die at all this term?" asked Harry, still gazing at the sky.

Jenkins stopped groping and turned round, a little scared. "I hope not! Why?" he said.

"You haven't got consumption or paralysis of the brain, or anything like that, have you?" asked Harry, half-apprehensive and half-coaxingly.

"What *are* you drivelling about?" cried Jenkins, feeling an uncomfortable sensation run down his back.

"I was only—er—wondering," sighed Harry.

Jenkins returned to the table with his cards.

"Howell! Howell!" cried the delighted youngsters, "Jinks has got it!"

"So have I, now," said Howell, crossing over with a smile to compare notes. Harvey and Frost and several others strolled across to the table, for Jinks's solutions were always tricky and surprising.

"What a rummy kid it is!" said Harvey, as Jinks finished his explanation amidst great applause. "It would have taken me a—Great Scott! what's that?"

All talking ceased in an instant; for out of the twilight at the end of the room came sounds of song—a shrill quavering voice that swelled and died away and swelled again like a loud and somewhat nasal flute.

"'Oh! sweet is the sound of the passing bell——'"

No one spoke, but as Harry advanced, still singing, towards the group, somebody seized a pack of cards and flung them straight at his head. The aim was true, the pack splitting and falling all round him.

"If I find out who threw that pack," he said, flushing deeply, "I shall beat him with a knotted handkerchief!" And he stood up defiantly with his back to the window.

"Don't make it angry!" whispered Tommy, in a quick undertone, "we'll make it talk again! It looked to me like an accident," he continued aloud, as the crowd moved in the direction of the window. "Was that you—er—singing?" he asked.

Harry's features relaxed into a smirk.

"Do you often sing like that?" asked Tommy, while the juniors squeaked with delight.

"Often, only better," answered Harry.

"Better than that?" asked Tommy, in mock surprise.

"Far better," he replied; "indeed, I am in sadly poor voice to-night."

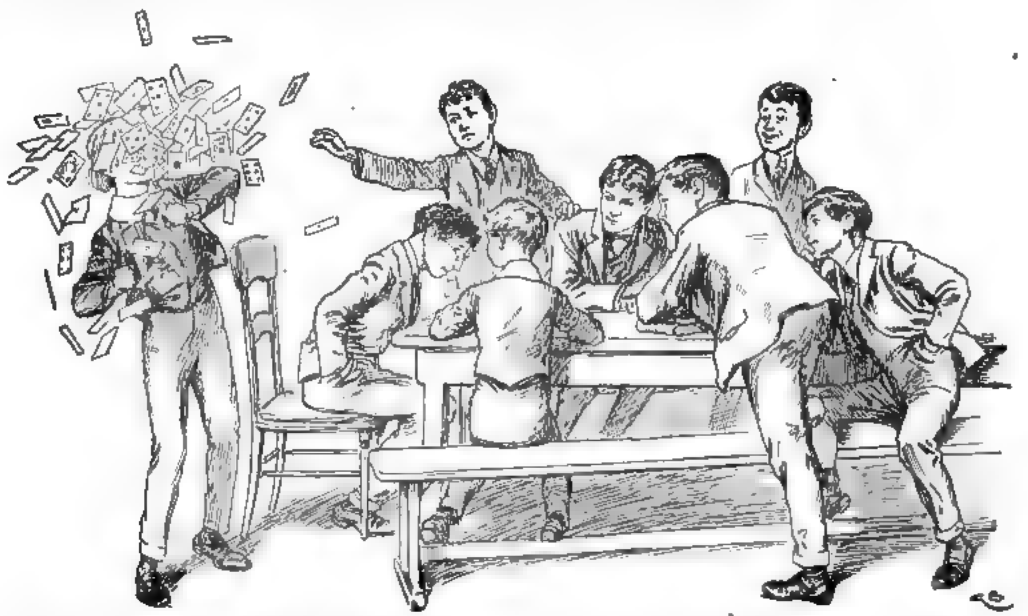
"And whom do you generally sing to?" asked Harvey.

"On Sundays I sing to my grandmother," he replied, "and on other days I sing to the monk."

"That must be rather jolly," said Harvey.

"Yes, I have a divine voice," continued Harry, "or so I am told. I intend to sit here every night, and sing and sing."

"That'll be very jolly," said Harvey, and a wicked thought came into his head as he saw that the pent-up laughter could not be kept in much longer. "Could you give us a little thing now, do you think?" he asked. Jenkins and several youngsters dived hurriedly out of sight.



THE AIM WAS TRUE, AND HARRY TURNED SHARPLY AS THE PACK SPLIT AND FELL ALL ROUND HIM.

"Certainly," said Harry, "if you'll sit round in a circle."

At this moment Jones minor returned looking very bristly and very wicked. Wriggling his way through the crowd, he stood before Harry, and eyed him curiously.

"You've got to go and have your hair cut," he said at last, as if he were condemning a criminal. The crowd chuckled in expectation.

"I?" asked Harry, looking somewhat alarmed.

"Yes, nice and short," said Jones.

"But I never——" began Harry, indignantly. Then a sudden smile came over his

face, and he shut his eyes. "You're stuffing me," he said.

There was a roar of laughter, and Jones looked a little foolish.

"You don't suppose you'd be allowed in church to-morrow like that?" he asked, "Why, you wouldn't be——"

"Funny boy!" said Harry, without opening his eyes.

There was another laugh, and Jones minor began to feel that he was getting the worst of it.

"Anyhow," he said, as he turned away, "it's all got to come off now!"

"Ha! ha!" said Harry, very solemnly. Just as things were getting really interesting, the matron bustled into the room.

"Come along, Harry!" she said, "the hairdresser's waiting!"

"Told you so!" said Jones, maliciously, as the look of alarm returned to Harry's face.

"But," objected the latter, bowing to the matron as he always did, for some reason best known to himself, "but I assure you I should look a perfect fright!"

The crowd yelled with delighted laughter. The little matron smiled as she grasped the situation. "Come here," she said, beckoning Harry outside the room, "I want to talk to you." There was a chorus of disappointed "Oh's!" from the crowd, but the matron checked them with a kindly frown.

Harry kept out of the way as much as possible for the rest of the evening, looking so supremely wretched that nobody thought of "rotting" him. Jenkins was sorry for him, and crossed over to him as he munched his evening biscuits, saying, "That looks ever so much better! Why don't you buck up now," he added, "and be like other chaps?"

"How could I be like other chaps?" asked Harry, with extraordinary dignity. "And, by the way," he continued, "I saw you playing cards, I think?"

"Well?" asked Jenkins.

"A sinful practice," said Harry, as he strode off to bed.

Jenkins almost wished he had not spoken.

(To be concluded.)

TOBOGGANING IN AUSTRIA.

ONE of the healthiest and most enjoyable of out-door amusements is tobogganing —in Norway called kjelking. The equipment is simple in the extreme; a flat wooden sledge with a long pole with which to steer. In this latter consists the art, for it needs

HERE WE HAVE THE YOUNG AUSTRIAN PRINCES HUGO AND ALFRED WINDISCHGRÄTZ TOBOGGANING WITH THEIR SISTER AND TWO FRIENDS.

practice before one is proficient in steering. The sledge, or *kjaelk*, may be of any length almost to accommodate one or several persons, but that the country be hilly is a *sine quâ non*. Given a good long slope, away you go over the frozen ground at tremendous speed, and with an efficient steerer, should there be windings and turnings, with no likelihood of calamities. Children, both in Scandinavia and the Austrian Tyrol, toboggan at an early age. In the accompanying pictures you see the young Princes Hugo and Alfred Windischgrätz with their sister tobogganing on one of their parents' many estates in Austria.

AND HERE, AFTER A DELIGHTFUL DESCENT, THEY ARE TOILING UPHILL AGAIN.

Now, it's all very delightful to go down, but this accomplished the sledge must be brought up again, and in the second picture we have the Princes struggling up the castle mount with it in tow. And a struggle it is up hill, through snow perhaps a foot deep. This falls to the masculine lot, and manfully they do it, the Austrian noble being renowned for his chivalry as well as for his proficiency as a sportsman. In Austria there is always some sort of sport on, chamois-hunting on the high Alps, bear and big game in the great forests, mountain-cock on the lower heights, etc., and every Austrian nobleman has his hunting-lodge where frequently the wife stays while the husband and party under the guidance of the *Jaeger* ascend. With her zither and guitar, books and fancy-work, and maybe the wife of some other member of the party, the time passes pleasantly enough in the pretty *châlet* up on the mountains that is provided with every comfort within, and has the advantage of life-giving air and a magnificent view without. On the huntsmen's return there is immense excitement, listening to all they have to tell and afterwards overhauling the trophies of the sport, which, when mounted, adorn either the castle halls or the ladies' fair selves. The Princes Windischgrätz are sportsmen *par excellence*, and own several lodges and deer-parks. Not only a hobby is it with them, but a passion, a leading factor in their lives. They don't mind what hardships they undergo for it, and hardships and dangers there are in plenty; for instance, turning out in the dead of night in Arctic cold, at such an altitude, and mounting higher, higher in the track of the *Jaeger*, hour after hour until the first faint streak of dawn bids them buckle to and begin. In my opinion it is this that makes the Austrian nobles the fine brave stalwart men they are, and which the young Princes in these pictures bid fair to become.

CAROLINE CORNER-OHLMUTZ.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

By F. W. CALKINS. **Illustrated by E. S. HODGSON.**

THIS is the story of Jared Fox, "a soloist in heroic drama," as he styles himself, and whose career as a successful impersonator grew out of peculiar circumstances.

It was an off-day at Hat-Band, when I arrived at the ranch on a hot afternoon in mid-July, and the "Picked Seven," as the company's superintendent had called them, lay in the shade of a big L-shaped log building.

They were lounging upon the sand in the loose undress of the cow-puncher. Several were snoring as I came within ear-shot; others lifted their heads lazily at my greeting, gazing at me with drowsy, nonchalant incuriousness. I dumped my valise and roll of blankets upon the sand and took a seat upon the pack.

"Gentlemen," I said, after I had wiped the sweat from my face, "I'm the new cook; your superintendent, Mr. Aitkins, hired me at Rapid last week."

"So? Mister Aitkins hired yeh, did 'e?"

I recognised the speaker, a middle-aged man with a long, sandy moustache and keen gray eyes. It was Gilsey, the foreman at Hat-Band, as Aitkins had described him.

"Mister Aitkins hired yeh, did 'e?" asked the man, with a drawling accent. "Well, that's sort o' curi's; Bob Aitkins gen'ly asks my consent w'en 'e sends a man out this a-way. Yew can walk right in and git supper, Cookee."

It was not yet four o'clock. I thought I knew the ways of cowmen pretty well, and laughed good humouredly. The men who were awake looked at me with a kind of solemn savagery, as though I had flouted an oracle.

"Will 'e get up and dance, boss?" asked one of them, laying his hand upon a recently discarded revolver belt. The boss slowly shook his head.

"Hits too tender," he said, in tones of commiseration; "we cain't have hits feet drug around yere full o' lead!"

Again I laughed, with the air of one who is in the joke and quite willing to furnish a moment's amusement, and again my merriment drew a stare of disapproval.

"What is the matter with these fellows?" I thought. "Perhaps it's my store pants, calico shirt, and stiff hat." I wore the hat because I had it and it was difficult to pack in my valise. I reflected that if my clothes were at fault I could soon remedy that defect from the contents of my grip. I determined to get into favour at once, if possible, and so I arose and announced my willingness to get supper if someone would show me the ranch kitchen and where to find the eatables.

"Cook-house 's at the south end," said the foreman, indifferently; "grub's all in sight."

As I walked in the direction indicated I heard muttered remarks among the men: "Nuther tenderfoot," "Busted Black-Hiller," and the like. I smiled a little bitterly. "Black Hills or bust" had been painted in big letters upon our wagon cover, when four of us had set out from Iowa toward the mining country. I was "busted" fast enough; but I resented the epithet of "tenderfoot," as what prospector of a year's experience does not?

I found the door of the cook-house open and walked in. The room was large—some twenty feet by twenty-four. Near the middle, on its ground floor, stood a long plank table, supporting an appalling array of dirty tin plates, cups, knives and forks, crusts and bacon rinds.

At the end near the door was a large, grimy cook-stove in the midst of a stack of grimier pots, kettles and frying-pans. Barrels, boxes and piles of canned goods were arrayed along one wall; against the legs of the

opposite hung hams and strips of bacon in every conceivable state of hagglement. Over and around all this débris a swarm of fat flies buzzed in plethoric content.

No wonder the cattle company's superintendent had offered eighty dollars per month to a man who would agree to cook here for a full year, for a competent cook could save his wages every month at the prices provisions then sold for!

I began a work of renovation at once.

"GENTLEMEN, I'M THE NEW COOK."

There was a clear, running stream close at hand and plenty of wood in sight. In the course of an hour, by the help of hot water, soap and sand, I had scoured the kettles, plates and things to a semblance of cleanliness. Then I got supper. A year's experience in cooking for myself had taught me to make baking-powder bread and to cook bacon, beans, coffee, etc., fairly well; and so when I called the men at six o'clock their table was loaded with smoking abundance.

I hoped they would show some signs of appreciation of my art when I called them, but they did not. There they sat—stolid, leather-visaged, feeding with business-like movements and in silence save for the rattle of their knives upon the tin platters. They scarcely spoke during the meal, and when to me, only to give orders in peremptory manner: "Cookee, more coffee," or "Drive them biscuit down the line, Cookee."

After supper, as I was washing the pots and plates, I heard hammering in an adjoining room. Presently the foreman and one of his men opened a door and came in, lugging a narrow, box-made, one-legged bunk, which they nailed up in a corner opposite my stove.

"Your bunk, Cookee," said the foreman when they had finished. "Breakfast at five an' no racket in the bunk-room—savey?"

But the brand of absolute inferiority was not placed upon me until later. I got breakfast on time in the morning. Again the men ate in silence. As they came in, however, each man had thrown a kind of belt-pouch or canvas sack upon one end of the table.

"Fill them sacks with snack quick's you git through eatin'," said Gilsey, "an' one for yourself; you go on drive to-day."

I knew that ranch cooks were expected to help occasionally on the line, and, though I

was not an expert horseman, I was rather glad of the prospect of a day out with the men. I would get acquainted with someone, at least. Alas, for my confidence and credulity!

The men saddled their broncos at the corrals and came in a squad about the cook-house door. I went out to them and handed each man his "snack." One of them held the lariat of an extra pony which stood with its head down lazily whisking at the morning flies. I mounted in perfect confidence.

"Got yer seat all right?" asked the cowboy. I nodded carelessly. He tossed me the end of the lariat. The rope fell across my pony's withers and instantly the creature set in pitching and bucking like a crazy thing. I clung frantically to the saddle-pommel for an instant and then was dumped ignominiously over the brute's head, neck and heels upon the sand.

The cowmen sat on their ponies looking at me in oppressive silence for a moment Then Gilsey, the foreman, spoke:

"Boys, this is hit," he said, solemnly; "Bob's college gradyeate! Ike," turning to the man who held my pony, "throw the leathers off that cayuse and then hit the road ter Custer an' git a bunch o' calico." And the squad put spurs to their horses and galloped away.

Hopelessly chagrined, I sat in the cook-house door and spent an exceedingly uncomfortable quarter of an hour. I understood the situation now and drew cold comfort from the knowledge. Aitkins had been over from Rapid City while I was settling my affairs there and had given these men my history, which I had detailed quite frankly to him. Doubtless he had bragged to them of hiring a college man for their cook—he had been tonguey and important in his talk to me.

I passed a dismal forenoon trying to think of some way to readjust myself; to establish a basis of decent respect at Hat-Band. I could think of no plan and finally gave it up, determined to do my work well and to honestly earn the wages paid.

That afternoon I lay in the shade and occupied myself gazing dreamily upon the foothills, finding variety of interest in their mottled skirts of pine and birch, their red rock-ledges and shaded cañons and their gray slopes dotted with horses and cattle.

After a time I bethought me to explore the ranch building. There was little to reward my curiosity. The bunk-room was a commodious but barren place, extending around both angles of the L; an array of a dozen bunks along the walls and a big stone fireplace alone relieved its box-like monotony. The east and last room of the building was a counterpart in size of the cook-house and was used for storage. Saddles, harness, rope, rawhide leather, buffalo pelts, old boots and sombreros hung along the walls or lay piled about in profusion.

The men did not return until nearly mid night. They came in by ones and twos and rattled noisily about the cook-room while helping themselves to the victuals I had placed upon the table. There was not the slightest reference to myself in their occasional remarks. "Ike" was the last one in.

When I got up in the morning I found a half-bolt of calico and a package of needles and thread upon the table. The fellow had actually ridden to Custer and executed the foreman's order of the morning before.

I laid the goods upon an empty barrel and got breakfast, feeling hot and angry enough. I determined to keep cool, however, and to hold my place at all hazards.

The men ate their meal in the usual fashion. The foreman informed me with grave emphasis, though, that if I intended cooking at that ranch I would have to wear calico. I answered seriously that cooks and waiters in Eastern restaurants always wore uniforms, and he had been very thoughtful to provide material for one. I should make good use of it, as I liked to be in style.

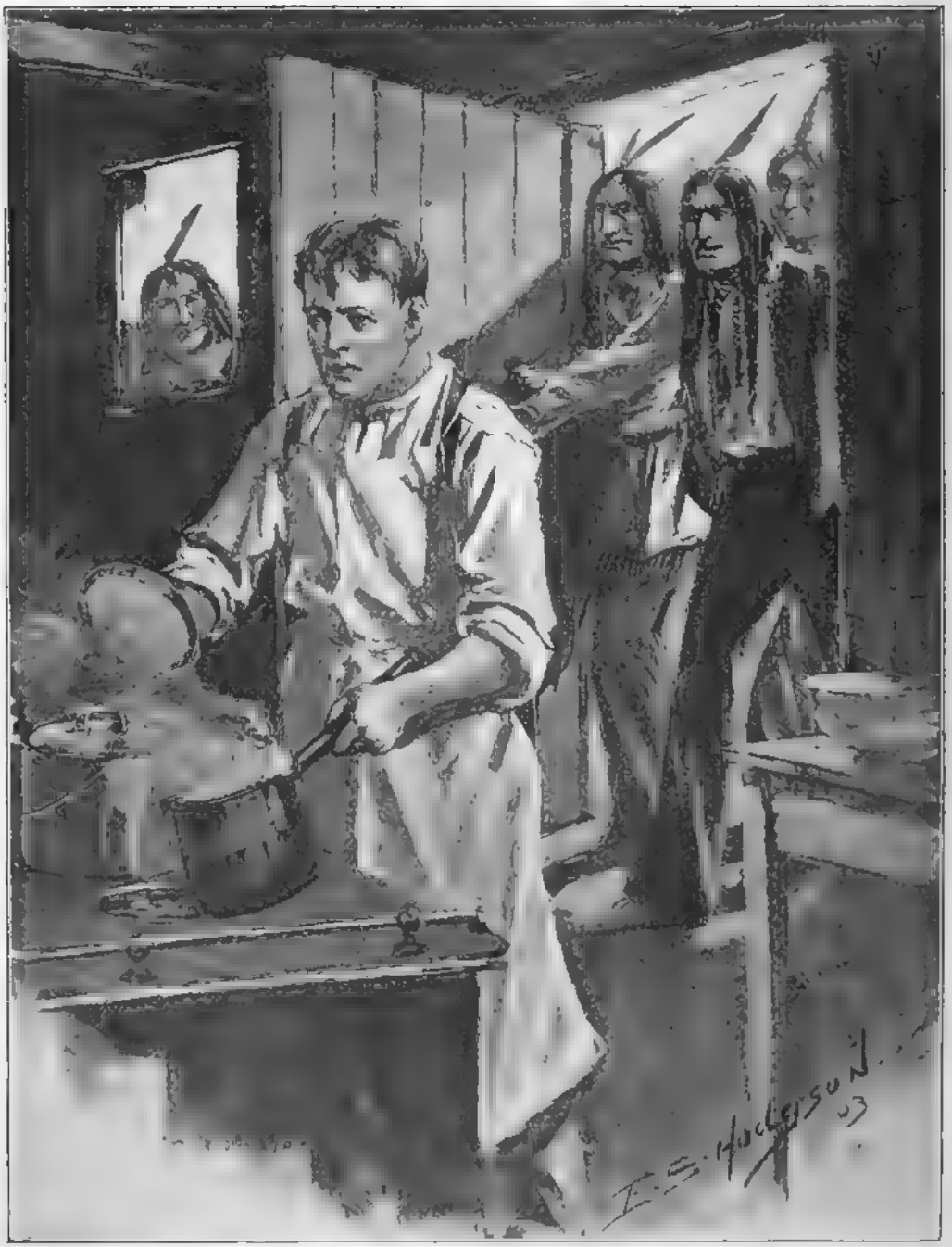
Gilsey shrugged his shoulders and the men grinned.

I had a bachelor's handy-mending outfit in my grip and, after my breakfast dishes were washed, I set to work upon the calico. When the men came to supper at night I wore a sleeveless skirt-apron, belted at the waist, which served very well to keep the grease off my clothes. The cowmen evinced neither surprise nor interest, save that each gave me a nod of mock politeness. "Evenin', Cookee," said each one as he filed to his place at table.

They now addressed each other very respectfully. "Have some of this bacon, Mister Lowry." "Pass those m'lasses, Mister McCormack," and so on.

There was certainly a combine against me —to keep me in place. A scullion in a Fifth Avenue kitchen might as well have expected an invitation to the parlour as I to meet these men on terms of equality—and I had nothing to play off against them.

As my status seemed hopelessly fixed, I



HO, HO, SQUAW COLA, SQUAW COLA," GRUNTED THE INDIANS

doggedly wore my apron and fashioned cloths of more convenient patterns. For weeks not a man at Hat Band spoke to me save to give an order or to curtly answer a question. The dreariness of the life became almost intolerable.

One day a half dozen Sioux rode over from their reservation across the Cheyenne River

and came to the cook-house to ask for bread. I was cooking, and, as the Indians crowded in and around the door, they grinned, grunted and nudged each other: "Ho, ho, squaw cola, squaw cola," they said, evidently much tickled and astonished.

I hurriedly gave each one a biscuit and a slice of bacon and then shut the door in their faces. The humorous contempt of these barbarians angered me and I began to feel that something indeed had gone wrong with me. A sort of ingrained stubbornness, however, held me to my work.

At the end of a couple of months the cattle company's paymaster came around and gave me a month's wages. This was some sort of recognition and I plucked up heart a little. Then came Fatty, and relief from intolerable loneliness.

He came in the afternoon of an October day—a young fellow, about my age, short and fat to obesity, and riding a pony quite as chunky as himself. He drew rein in front of me as I sat in the cook-house door.

"H'lo, pardner," he greeted, cheerily, dismounting from his dumpy bronco.

"Pardner!" I rose to him like a hungry trout to a red fly.

"I'm Fatty—jest Fatty," he announced, grinning into my beaming face. I wrung his hand—he could not have told me more joyful news.

"Used to punch cattle for the company in Nebrasky," he explained, "till I got too fat. B'en runnin' a dray at Rapid—busted, an' Bob tol' me to come over an' lay down awhile."

It would have been a sacrilege, in my then state of mind, to have harboured the suspicion that Fatty had been a victim to a prodigious appetite for beer. I made him more than cordially welcome; helped him to picket his pony down the creek, where there was grass, and then cooked him a rousing dinner of beans, bacon, fried bread and tomatoes.

We were soon upon the most intimate terms and swapped personal history in detail. Fatty listened to my experience at Hat-Band without apparent sympathy—he seemed to look upon my treatment by the men as a matter of course.

"These men, yer," he said, "is picked line-riders—a picked seven"—he spoke as if there were occult significance in the number "an' this ranch is the reserve-line ranch. Injuns on one side, rustlers on t'other—haf to keep both off—haf to keep stock off the reserve, too. Hit takes mighty good men—best ther is, an' they don't cotton to common folks—don't haf to."

How I enjoyed this jerky confidence! I freely forgave him the plain inference of the last quoted remark, too!

Fatty helped me to get supper. When the men returned that evening and came into the cook-house, the foreman and several others, who seemed to know the new-comer, greeted him indifferently.

"H'lo Fatty," they said. Fatty served them to coffee and beans and seemed to feel honoured in the privilege.

After supper he fell to work, moved in an empty bunk, and nailed it in a corner opposite to my own. Thus, to my delight, were we domiciled together.

As the days went by we had plenty of leisure in which to amuse ourselves. We fished, shot grouse, pine-hens and cotton-tails, or in disagreeable weather stayed at the cook-house and played checkers or sang songs. I rendered college songs and popular airs pretty well, and Fatty was especially good in his "Days of Forty-Nine." He often bewailed the loss of a banjo he had felt obliged to part with.

One day I ventured to turn my strong battery on Fatty. At high school and at a Western college I had been in demand at "literaries" for heroic recitals—"Parting of Douglas and Marmion" and that sort of thing. My voice, even at fourteen, was heavy and flexible and well adapted to a florid style of declamation.

I gave for Fatty's benefit a number of pieces in my best manner and was rapturously encored.

At the affecting parts in "Spartacus" my audience shed copious tears, and, in the tragi-heroic, he gripped the bench he sat on with both hands and glared at me with mouth and eyes wide open.

Fatty's genuine emotion and emphatic approval of my performance gave me an inspiration—the bunkroom a stage—Christmas recitals—perhaps I might interest the picked seven at Hat-Band!

I proposed the scheme to Fatty, tentatively, and he "reckoned it would go with the boys, shore." I knew the cowmen's love for any kind of a show and I determined to give one, with Fatty's help, such as those fellows had perhaps never seen nor heard of.

The next morning I engaged Fatty to fill my place as cook, and rode his pony, or rather a pony he had borrowed of the "company," to Custer. There I wrote to a young lady,

THERE WAS LITTLE DEMONSTRATION UNTIL I GAVE THEM "SPARTACUS TO THE GLADIATORS"

whom I knew at Devonport, Iowa, who was a newspaper reporter and versed in stage matters. I sent a draft for seventy dollars, with a request that she fill an enclosed order for me.

Three weeks later Fatty drove the ranch team to Custer and brought back a load of lumber and a stout, iron-bound trunk. When I opened the trunk there was nothing left to desire; my friend had more than filled instructions. Gorgeously figured calico for curtains, various cheaply decorated but showy costumes, a tinselled coat of mail, helmet, visor and shield of steel-coloured pasteboard, a Roman short-sword, forged to order, masks and cheap draperies for dummy lay-figures, harness-rings and wax candles galore—all and more than I had asked for. My friend wrote that she had personally helped to make each costume, for which I had sent the measurements.

At the bottom of the trunk there was a new banjo for Fatty. His eyes shone and filled with emotional tears when I gave it to him; and he soon discovered ability, too, in strumming accompaniments to simple ditties.

When the cowmen came that night Gilsey asked Fatty—apropos of the load of lumber—whether Cookee intended to lay a floor in his cook-house.

"No, sir," said Fatty, boldly; "Fox is goin' to give a show, he is, on Christmas night, an' 'e wants to rig a stage in the bunk-room. Will you all take hit in?"

They were at supper. Gilsey looked his surprise, and the men turned incredulous eyes upon me as I rattled nervously at the stove. The boss recovered himself quickly and remarked, with apparent indifference, that if there was to be a show at Hat-Band he reckoned the boys would take it in.

"You bet!" said the men; and the habit of ignoring me was immediately resumed. In the days which followed, Fatty and I were busy mortals. We worked at our stage in forenoons; in the afternoons we rehearsed in song and banjo music and fashioned dummy gladiators of gunny-sacks stuffed with straw.

The work in the bunk-room advanced without objection or comment from the foreman or the men.

Five days before Christmas, Fatty and I had completed our stage, which we built in the main corner of the bunk-room, facing both wings of the L. It was a convenient platform, raised three feet from the floor, with some sixteen feet of frontage. Above this we rigged a stout curtain rod, strung with harness rings.

Then, on the fifth morning before Christmas, Fatty mysteriously disappeared. I arose to find him gone and his banjo missing from its peg upon the wall. I was astonished but not convinced, until I had run out to where I had myself picketed his borrowed pony some eighty rods from the ranch building. The animal was gone. . . . .

I seemed destined to play the part of Wamba the Witless at Hat-Band, without that celebrated clown's occasional opportunities to make myself felt. I believed evil of Fatty. I could arrive at no other conclusion than that which consigned him to the evils of an overweening appetite for beer. After the excitement of getting ready for a "sure-enough" show had worn off, doubtless the possession of a new banjo and the memory of abundant malt refreshment to be had by strumming in saloons had proven too much for his resolution—if he had any. My disgust knew no bounds.

At breakfast, however, the men evinced neither surprise nor interest in the absence of Fatty. It seemed, in fact, that nothing outside the line of cattle-punching could stir the imperturbable Picked Seven. In spite of their indifference, their silent disapproval of myself even, I was forced to admire the fellows. They were sober, faithful, hard-riding cowmen. Not a man of them—so much for the judgment of the Belle Fourche Cattle Company—was of the rowdy persuasion. They were mostly men of middle age, or past thirty years, at least; men who thoroughly understood the business of the cattle country and who attended strictly to their duties. Trained riders, Indian fighters, plainsmen of years of experience, from their point of view I was simply a young "tenderfoot," of no quality for their kind of work; one who ought to be at home with his folks "in the states." I had pretty nearly come around, as I believed, to their way of thinking, too.

I was glad they were too merciful, at least, to make remarks in my hearing in regard to my latest idiosyncrasy in going to the expense of preparing to give them a show and in blindly trusting to Fatty as an accessory.

As the days wore on toward Christmas there came upon me a yearning to go home—a homesickness which I had to fight as one would battle with the coming on of disease. On the day before Christmas, after the men had gone out to "punch" back a lot of

cattle which had crossed the Cheyenne, my resolution was sorely tried. To pack my grip, walk to a station and take a stage for the U. P. road was a temptation I had to overcome. I only escaped by seizing a gun and tramping to the foothills after pine-hens.

The weather was wonderfully mild. Summer had lapped far into the fall months and we were having Indian summer when there should have been a foot of snow. To this mild weather, unquestionably, is due the fact that I am to-day a professional impersonator. When I returned from a successful hunt, feeling much better in mind, there were visitors at the ranch. There was a camp of Sioux some forty rods below the building. I could see the tops of half a dozen tepees above the rise of a bench in the bottom-land, and ponies were picketed far out among the sage-brush. There were strange ponies at the horse corral, also, and numbers of strange cowmen and other fellows about the premises. I was considerably astonished at first; then it dawned upon me that there had been trouble about cattle coming down from the foothills and pressing upon the reserve. Doubtless this gathering was a preconcerted one to settle some difficulty of the sort.

As I approached the door of the cook-house a dozen or more of the men lying about upon the sand looked at me curiously.

I said, "How do you do, gentlemen?" and I was surprised enough when several of them answered pleasantly, and one of them, a young fellow, evidently from "the States," touched his hat politely.

Without stopping to talk to them I immediately went into the cook-house, deposited my game and gun and began getting supper. From time to time, as I was at work, I noted through the open door more new arrivals at Hat-Band. Men were coming from all directions, apparently. That something uncommon had happened on the range there certainly could be no doubt. New men kept coming, putting their horses in the coral or picketing them upon the prairie, and joining the groups, which quickly increased to a crowd lounging about the different angles of the building.

Evidently these men were waiting for the coming of the Picked Seven—and what was to happen then excited my curiosity not a little.

The foreman had said the men would come in about five o'clock or later. My bread was baked, coffee made and the game ready to fry for supper, when the bunk-room door burst open and I heard a familiar voice shouting:

"Great Scott!" it said. "Fox, w'at's th' matter with yeh? Hain't ye goin' to give a show? Here I comes 'xpecting to find the curtains up and fixin's ready an' finds you a gettin' supper, an' a hundred men an' fifty Injuns waitin' for the bell to ring!"

It was Fatty who pounced in upon me—Fatty, excited, blooming, triumphant! His fluffy cheeks were aglow, but with the hue of health and hard riding; not with the liver-tinted flush of the beer-drinker.

"The show!" I managed to ejaculate, "these men haven't surely come to—" I could get no further. In fact, I had packed away the stuff I had bought, thrusting the useless truck out of sight and out of mind. As the stage we had rigged up could be utilised for extra bunk-room and for seats, with a stowaway hole beneath, I had let it stand as perhaps a useful memento of my folly.

"Man, man!" shouted Fatty, in amazement, "couldn't you guess w'at all the fellows come for? I've been drummin' 'em up fer five days, an' hain't I corralled a daisy lot? There's good money in this crowd, too."

"Money!" I gasped. "You don't mean to say you're going to make all these men pay to come in?"

"They can't get it without," declared Fatty; "foreman wouldn't let 'em, an' they wouldn't keer a red for a free show, neither. Ye see, Gilsey talked to me afore I started out, an' 'lowed 'e didn't want you givin' a free show at Hat-Band. I tol' 'im you was a shore 'nough showman, an' 'e tol' me to go out and kin' of ring in a Christmas evenin' surprise on yeh. The whites pays a dollar a man to come in an' the reds four bits, an' they'll be mighty tickled they've come, too, w'en you get through with 'em."

I could have hugged Fatty and should have fallen upon his neck and wept if there had been time. As it was I wrung his hand for a moment—not without wet eyes—and then we fell to work like a couple of lumberjacks

To put up the curtains properly and to teach Fatty how to manage them, to arrange a dressing-room and bestow my effects in the rear corner of the stage, to prepare brown paper helmets and visors for a half-dozen gunny-sack dummies, to set wax-tapers for footlights and a row of them some three feet apart upon the walls clear around the angles of the room, was the work of fully two hours. This may seem to have been elaborate preparation for a crowd of cowboys, miners, wood-cutters and Indians, but I can assure

you the effect of the ensemble was not lost on them.

The Picked Seven returned and ate supper about seven o'clock. Fatty and I stepped in while they were eating to snatch a bite and drink a cup of coffee. I noted, with a thrill, an appearance of suppressed interest—even of excitement, perhaps, in the faces of all the men. They talked in subdued tones, but quite freely, of the coming of the crowd, and there were even allusions to the show in their wonder as to whether the bunk-room would hold all the "fellers."

As I drank my coffee I saw Gilsey regarding me curiously and with a kindly light such as I had never seen before in his eyes. I had, in fact, hard work to keep down my emotion under the steady gaze he bent upon my face. It was as if he had suddenly expressed a boundless faith in myself—in success for me in any proper undertaking. And this complete reversal of opinion from the one he had seemed to hold for so long was almost more than I could bear. Doubtless I had grown morbid under these months of suppression.

I went back to the bunk-room and to my work in a whirl of excitement. In an hour the room was lighted on all sides, and I was ready to begin the entertainment. Fatty announced the fact to the men in the cook-room and the Picked Seven came filing in.

I stood upon the stage, with the curtains thrown back, dressed in the costume of James VI. of Scotland, and made my bow to them. Never shall I forget the look upon their faces as the men took in that brilliantly lighted scene. They were like children introduced to fairyland. Their emotions seemed those of subdued wonder and they conversed in low tones as they took their seats upon bunks nearly opposite the stage—all but the foreman.

Gilsey, with Fatty, walked on to the outside door of the bunk-room. There the two talked earnestly for a few minutes. Then Fatty passed through the door, and a minute later I heard, outside, a half-dozen pistol-shots fired in quick succession—a signal doubtless agreed upon without my knowledge. In the meantime the foreman, with a business-like air, quickly arranged a couple of three-legged stools beside the door, took his seat upon one and laid his broad-brimmed hat with crown upturned upon the other. Fatty returned, came to the stage, drew the curtain and stood inside ready to open the show when the crowd should get in.

As I gave final instructions to Fatty, going over the programme, orally, for the hundredth time, perhaps, I heard the tramp of men as they came through the door and the clink of their dollars as the foreman tossed them into his hat. Fatty peeped between the curtains, but I resisted the temptation. Finally, there were shuffling sounds and some guttural exclamations, and I knew that the Sioux were coming in. I was astonished and pleased at the remarkable quiet which prevailed. There could be only one way of accounting for it—the absence of liquor and the influence of the Picked Seven at Hat-Band. When the last man had gained admission and found standing or sitting room, the silence was almost intense.

I had changed my costume. Fatty rang a tiny bell, which had been provided by my caterer, seized his banjo and drew the curtains. We stepped upon the stage together dressed in Highland plaids.

I have faced many an audience since, but never one which gave me such an instantaneous thrill of inspiration. Directly in front of me, in what might have been called the parquet space, were half a hundred young Sioux, squatted cross-legged upon the floor, togged in all the bravery of their tribes, with grave, upturned faces and glittering black eyes, quietly, yet intensely expectant. Behind these, yet quite near enough, seated upon the bunks, leaning against the walls or squatted Indian fashion, were rows of cowmen, miners and wood-cutters from the Cheyenne range and the foothills. Under the light of rows of wax tapers every white face seemed to have in it the glow of Christmas and of home-memories. The foreman, Gilsey, sat in a cleared space which seemed to have been reserved for him, leaning back against the wall with his arms folded and a flush of emotion—was it pride?—upon his leathern face. Every man in the room had removed his hat. I could have prayed had there been time, but there was not.

Instead, I sang a Scotch home ballad and Fatty strummed an accompaniment. When the song had ended I saw that I was giving my audience—those of my own race, at least—what had been expected. After that it was an easy and wholly delightful thing to sing and declaim for them.

There was little demonstration until I gave them "Spartacus to the Gladiators." When, shield and sword in hand, I dared Fatty and the Dummies to "meet me on the bloody sands," there was an outburst of war-whoops among the Sioux and shouts of

approval ran around the room. When I wound up with that stirring appeal at the close, my audience was fairly lifted off its feet. The Indians could not understand the words, of course; but they followed the action, and the tones of my voice excited them to a fine frenzy of interest and there were fierce grunts and whoops of approval —" E'e'e'eyegh! Vih! Vi-hi!" Shrill and nerve-compelling war-cries

I felt that this was not a Christmas effect, but an audience of such a character, so widely gathered, were certainly entitled to a variety of emotions. And it was my audience; there could be no doubt of it. I could make every tone of my voice felt. When I sang, in soft cadence. at the close, "We Shall Meet, but We Shall Miss Him," I saw more than one rough miner and cowman draw a sleeve across his eyes.

The crowd filed out of the bunk-room as quietly as it had entered, and the foreman came to the stage with a hat half-filled with silver and small bills. He emptied the contents upon the stage front.

"Mr. Fox," he said, hurriedly, "ef here ain't enough stuff tu pay fer your trouble, lemme know what's wanted -a hundred and ten, seventy-five, I make it. An' now I want to ask ye to do yer last cookin' at Hat-Band. We're goin' to have a barbecue to'rds mornin', and hit'll need lots of bread besides the meat for this crowd, and, ef you please, Mr. Fox, make a bar'l of coffee."

He turned upon his heel before I could utter a word of gratitude and walked outside. I gave Fatty ten dollars—all he would take —of the money. Then we rushed to the cook-room and set to work. It was evident that we would need more room for baking than the stove-oven, big as that was, could afford, and Fatty succeeded in finding two Dutch ovens in the storage-room.

Such a baking! For six long hours we did nothing but mix dough and turn out baking-powder biscuits. We made more than a thousand of them. As we worked, we were aware of activity and fun outside. A kind of cowboy Christmas jubilee was in progress. There were bonfires and there were pistol-practice and foot-racing, and, above all, there was a barbecue after the largest and most generous style.

When we finally went out we were assisted by a dozen men in carrying bread and pails of hot coffee. A space of sand soil between the ranch-buildings and the creek was lighted with a circle of bonfires. In the centre of this ring of flame was a huge pile of stones, brought up from the creek channel, and on the stone heap lay the steaming carcasses of two range beeves, roasted to a turn. The embers of a fire had been raked away from the heap, and two men stood about the hot stones, cutting away smoking strips of meat with their knives. The crowd at large was squatted in groups inside the circle of fires, like Indians in council.

Several dry-goods boxes and a barrel were brought out from the storage-room to serve as a receptacle for the bread and coffee. When all the stacks of provisions were in readiness to distribute, the foreman of Hat-Band and his men dismissed other helpers to their places in the crowd.

"Now, gen'l'men," said Gilsey, addressing the circle of expectant faces, "Mr. Fox, the showman, who's goin' to give his show in Rapid an' Deadwood an' a heap of other places, an' who knows wa't's proper tu say for a Christmas morning barbecue, will speak a few words. Hats off, gen'l'men."

What could I say? Never had I been so overcome as I was at that moment! The tears rushed into my eyes; the sea of rough expectant faces swam in a dizzy maze in the firelight; confused emotions chased one another in my brain. I turned my eyes upward for inspiration. Overhead was a "wonderful, clear night of stars"; in the east a faint glow of coming dawn. My brain cleared, as if by magic, and I lifted up my voice and said:

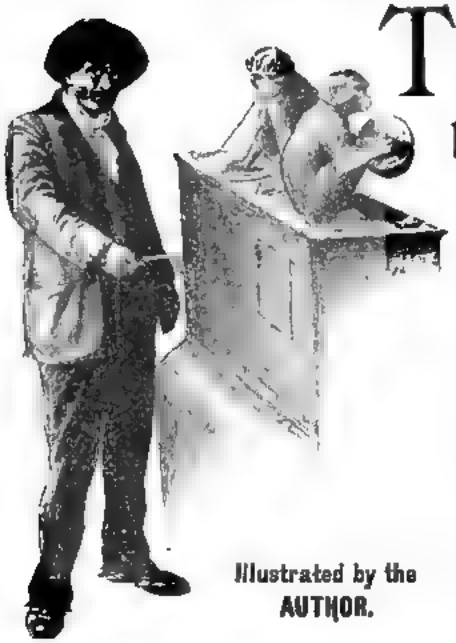
"My friends, this is the birthday morning of Jesus of Nazareth. Let us remember Him. Let us remember father and mother and brother and sister—home! and all the dear ones, living or dead, and let us say the prayer which Jesus taught."

When I had finished that simple morning invocation, speaking with an emotion which I could not control, a dozen voices joined in the amen, and a number of men at Hat-Band turned away quickly to hide their faces.

And so, in the dawn of a Christmas morning, we sat down to feast—and, in the appreciation of that rude frontier assemblage, I had found my vocation.

A·TALE·OF TWO·MONKEYS

by E. Cockburn Reynolds



Illustrated by the AUTHOR.

IT was Christmas Eve. Three times in succession had the piano-organ hammered out its stock of stale tunes to the damp grey houses in a poor back street in Soho, yet the exasperating monotony of sound had not driven one individual to open a window or fling the performer a single copper. The few foot-passengers hurried by as if desirous of escaping from the ear-splitting din of his organ. Not a child was to be seen, not even behind a window-pane, though these were their Christmas holidays.

The Italian cursed his luck. It was the worst day he had had for a long time. Not a penny had he taken. He would go home. The cold drizzle would do his instrument no good.

Two shivering monkeys were crouched on the organ, huddled together for mutual warmth and sympathy. As his eye fell on them, he cursed again. Would these lazy pests only play their cymbals, they might have attracted children to the windows by this time.

He savagely jerked the chains that held them with a force that almost dislocated their necks, shouting his harsh commands at them the while. Then, putting the cymbals into their hands, he commenced to bang forth again his played-out tunes.

The monkeys, alarmed, clashed their cymbals together with an energy that soon tired their poor little arms, the cymbals being far too weighty for them: and then resumed their former attitude, drooping and shivering in the wintry air.

With a string of oaths, the organ-grinder dragged them to the ground and commenced kicking their frail little bodies. His brutal conduct was soon stopped by a passing gentleman, who clearly explained the nature of his offence to him and urged him to come to the nearest police-station for farther enlightenment.

But the wily Carlos stared at him in well-simulated wonderment, pretending he did not understand a word of English. The gentleman went away baffled, but Carlos, suspecting he had gone for a policeman, quickly trundled off his organ in an opposite direction, and, after a hasty flight through many evil-smelling alleys, arrived at a low wine-shop of his acquaintance. Leaving the organ to look after itself, he disappeared through the mean doorway, and was soon carousing with other lazy Italians, as poor and as dirty as himself.

There was a sigh of satisfaction from the monkeys as he was lost to view.

"Oh! my brother! Will this never end?" sobbed one. "Is there no way of escaping from this tyrant?"

"If we escape, where could we go to? I fear this is no town, but a strange land where houses take the place of trees and fields. Many months have we wandered with this man, yet never seen beyond the thickly planted houses."

"True. Alas! It is a land accurst. You will find in its market places no communities of dogs; no crows on the housetops; no hawk in the air; and never a sacred bull wandering down the highways. The grain baskets from which we fed in the Far East as they lay open on the pavements, are here hid behind glass,

and so is the sweet stuff, all shut away as if this were a land of robbers."

"Ah! brother! that was a good land we came from."

"There the sun and moon were no make-believes."

"And we might wander the jungle for days without seeing a man."

"Those were happy times. Even our wars with the lungoors and the leopards seem pleasant to remember."

"Sometimes an evil dream seizes me at night so that I almost cry out in terror."

"What dream is it?"

"That the tyrant has parted us. Sold one of us away to another like himself."

"Oh! that were terrible indeed! It makes me think of a dream of fear I have sometimes when I see again the black panther creeping towards you who sleep in the sun; creeping without noise; creeping like a shadow. And I, like a coward, sit close by, unable to move, unable to cry, turned into stone from very fear, until I see the rush and spring, and you, whom I love so much, writhing under those terrible claws. Then I feel I too shall perish rather than live without you; and perish in an attempt to kill your enemy. And still in my dream, in that moment of great fear, I think of a tale of how a monkey had killed a panther by biting into its spine in the small of the back. So I spring on the great black back of the savage and bite deep, then turn and fly as he leaves you to attack me."

"Ah! brother, I, too, remember that day. It was a brave deed for one so small. 'Tis a debt I can never repay."

"It was nothing—nothing, brother. What does a little service count balanced against the love between you and me?"

"Alas! It is all we have now to make us forget our misery, our tyrant master, the cold and hunger."

"Alas! and to think we never would have been taken captives but for thee, my brother."

"Why for me?" cried Churro, in anger, "was it not thy greediness that caused it?"

"*My* greediness? 'Twas thine."

"Thine!"

"Thine!"

They sprang apart, tusks gleaming, eyes shining, and snarling hoarsely with rage. This was their daily quarrel.

Poor, foolish monkeys; they had been caught in their far-off Indian jungle by the old trick—a bottle of gram tied to a tree.

The monkey-catcher counts on the extreme greediness of the monkey, who will cling on to his handful of grain, which the narrow neck of the bottle will not allow him to pull out, until it is too late to save himself from capture.

These two monkeys got their hands into the same bottle, and quarrelled as to which should leave go first. With a whisk a net came through the air and settled on the two disputants. They were soon roped and drugged and carried off to their captor's hut in the jungle. Here they were starved till their wild nature disappeared. When they were thoroughly tame, their captor took them to the bird-market in the bazaar, where they were sold to a monkey-man, who taught them to perform tricks, ride on a goat, fire guns, etc. Then they commenced a not unpleasant life, strolling from town to town and from village to village with their happy-go-lucky master, who was always kind to them.

One day, in Bombay, an agent from the Earl's Court Exhibition engaged the monkey-man, as well as many artisans, jugglers, etc., to go to London to give a representation of Indian life. Thus the monkeys came to England, and when the Exhibition closed their owner sold them to their present master, the organ-grinder, who proved a cruel tyrant and starved and ill-used them frequently.

* * * * *

To-day, after a couple of hours spent in the dirty wineshop with others like himself, Carlos came out very drunk, and, instead of giving the monkeys any food, swore they were the cause of all his troubles, and that he was going to do for them at last. In this state he started homeward.

In spite of the handles of the organ, which propped him up, he lurched heavily in his walk. After going some distance, he entered his alley—a dirty slum somewhere off the Tottenham Court-road. The floors were flush with the pavements; the houses, only two storeys high, were in the last stages of neglect and decay.

He turned into a vile-smelling passage and from that, through a back entrance, into a walled-in space, which was something between a small back-yard and a dustbin; for refuse of all kinds lay on the ground in a heap. Under a shed which took up half the space, the organ-grinder thrust his instrument, covering it with a heap of torn and dirty sacking and a worn-out tarpaulin.

The monkeys shared his bedroom with

him upstairs—a small back room lighted by one tiny window of primitive pattern. The place had a foul animal smell in it which was not altogether due to the presence of the monkeys.

Carlos chained them to a small packing case lined with straw, in which they both slept. Throwing his hat into a corner and his coat and waistcoat on the bed, he proceeded to try and unlace his boots, but in spite of many efforts he could not open the knots, which were fast with mud and wet. In a hazy sort of way he searched for his clasp knife to cut the laces, and, having found it, stared at it, wondering what he wanted it for. Just at that moment the monkeys, who were famishing for want of food, gave a little whimper to remind him they were starving. He stared at them and remembered.

"You no worka you getta no dinnah."

They whimpered again.

"What! you must dinnah? Very well, you eata each odder. Ho! Ho!"

The idea tickled him immensely and he indulged in a burst of drunken laughter.

"See, I vill knifa someone for the odder to eata."

He opened his clasp knife and got upon his feet, and the monkeys shrank into their corner in terror, for they saw he was in one of his worst moods, and there was no knowing what cruelty he might not subject them to.

He came unsteadily towards the monkeys, found their chains, undid their collars, and gave them their liberty.

"Now I maka you dance with my knifa."

He lunged forward with his knife, and, before the monkeys could escape, the broad blade came down on the back of one of them, giving it an ugly wound in the shoulder. He roared and laughed at this piece of brutal cruelty, and commenced chasing them round the room with the clumsiness of a drunken man. Every now and again he struck at one with his knife, but the nimble monkeys, in spite of the small size of the apartment, managed to evade the blow every time, springing from bed to mantelpiece or box or shelf. Carlos, angered at this fruitless chase, and growing mad over his many failures, seized his coat, and, throwing it over one of the brothers, who had just alighted on the bed, secured him. He then removed the coat, and, holding the monkey down on the bed, raised the knife on high.

In another moment the blade would have

THE BLADE CAME DOWN ON THE BACK OF ONE OF THEM.

reached the heart of the poor little creature. But the other monkey, seeing in what danger his brother was, forgetful of his own terror of the tyrant, sprang on the latter and bit him in the leg. The sudden pain caused the Italian to let go his captive and attempt to stab the monkey that was biting into his calf. Kood nimbly jumped aside and the knife missed. The man, in a fury, made at him again with a drunken spring, but, tripping, fell forward on his face, the knife beneath him. He made one attempt to rise, then groaned and remained lying face downwards on the bare boards of the floor.

Kood had repaid the debt he owed his brother.

* * * * *

The man lay very still on the ground. The monkeys waited in fear and trembling, but he seemed asleep. An hour passed. Then hunger and curiosity prevailed. They approached their master and timidly touched him. Then, growing bolder, they pulled at his garments, yet there was no movement in his limbs.

Then said Kood: "Brother, now is our

chance; let us escape while the chains are off our necks."

They crept quietly towards the window. The man never moved. They opened the crazy fastening and glided out. There were people in the streets, so they climbed up the water-spout and remained on the roof till late at night. Then, when the streets were quiet, they came down and fled up the Tottenham Court-road.

"Whither shall we go, brother, in this wilderness of houses? We shall be captured again in the morning."

"To the North—to the North let us fly. I can smell trees and water and open country."

They ran on, hiding in the shadows if they heard a footstep. They were faint for want of food and water, so when Churro discovered an orange which had rolled from some coster's barrow, they were overjoyed, and shared it equally between them.

After much running they came to the Regent's Canal. There they clambered down to the water and had a good drink.

"Brother, I feel that we are nearing a jungle."

"Why, Churro? True, there are many trees in this place, but the houses are also many."

"I thought I got the smell of wolves and tigers."

"That cannot be."

"Hark! There is the roar of a tiger."

"And the howl of a wolf. Where they be, there will be jungles and freedom."

"Let us hasten before the dawn comes."

They ran along the banks of the Canal till they were in the Zoo.

They climbed up the steep bank nearest the elephant house.

"Brother, I get the scent of Hathi, the elephant. What does he here within this house?"

They peered into the open door and saw several elephants and rhinoceros. "They, too, are prisoners behind bars."

"Perhaps they play cymbals also, and dance to a man's music."

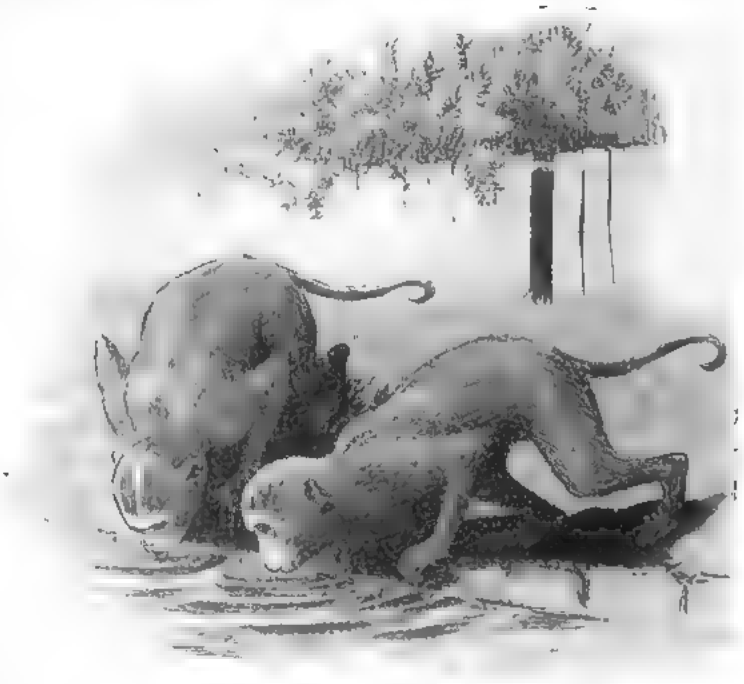
"There is scent on the breeze of many Bunders. Let us hope our brothers are not also in cages. We thought this was a jungle and a place of freedom. But there are jungle people everywhere captives behind bars."

They did not make use of the tunnel but lightly sprang the fence, crossed the road and entered the other side of the garden near the gate.

A sleepy crow called to them.

"How have you got out? Show me the way to freedom, and I will tell you where the best fruit of the land grows."

Outside the monkey-house two Tchili monkeys slept in a cage. They awoke at the sound of steps.



THEY CLAMBERED DOWN AND HAD A GOOD DRINK.

"How have you got out?" they asked. "Is there any way of moving these bars? We have nuts in our cheek-pouches which we will give you if you will only show us the way."

A window was open in the monkey house. They sprang on to the sill and sat there wondering at the huge cages of sleeping monkeys. Soon they were discovered by those in the nearest cage, and the word went along: "*Escaped! Escaped!*" till the whole house echoed with cries, from the loud dog bark of the Abyssinian baboon to the tiny chirrup-

ing of the Marmosets, each wanting to know how they had got out and which was the defective cage.

When the uproar had somewhat subsided, Kood and Churro explained that they had not escaped from any cage in that place but from a man who took them about with a music-box.

"Ah! you were happy," said a Golden Rhesus, "to travel about from place to place being fed on the best of fruits and sweets and petted by women and children."

"Alas! ours was no life of pleasure," replied Kood. "We seldom had a full meal. There was no petting—only cold and wet, hunger and kicks."

"Then we are much better off," said the caged monkey, "though we are held captives in these pleasure gardens, for there is always plenty of food, and they are good to us, and never beat us, nor are we ever cold or wet."

Then a black spider-monkey from South America, whose tail wandered about clutching this and that as if quite independent of its owner, and who had a tiny round head and eyes like a gimlet, said:

"Why, look at your shoulder, stranger. It is bleeding."

"The man did that," answered Kood.

"Why! did you bite him?"

"Not then. It was his drunken fun."

"Oh!" exclaimed several in pity, "yours was an unhappy life. Come into our cage. We have almost the freedom of the jungles compared with your life."

Kood and Churro had left the window and approached the cages to talk better with their fellows. Suddenly, with a slam, the window was shut to. A keeper had seen them from the outside, and had captured them thus.

They trembled a little when the keeper approached them, being fearful lest he should strike or kick them. But he did neither. Sitting down, he took Kood on his knees and examined the knife-gash in his shoulder. Then he brought warm water and soothing ointment, and was so very kind and gentle as he dressed the wound that Kood and his brother were soon relieved of their fears.

The wound dressed, the keeper gave the little runaways a good supper, and finally put them into a roomy cage by themselves, so that the other monkeys might grow accustomed to their presence and make friends with them.

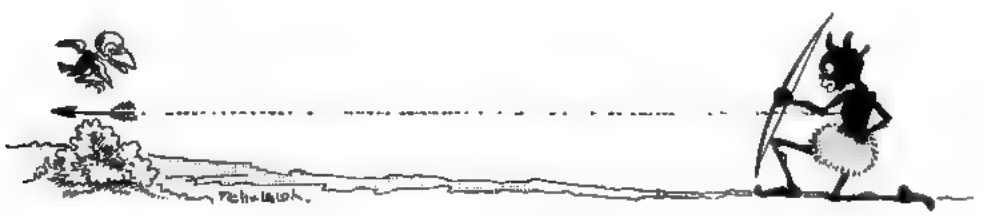
The gash on Kood's shoulder and the swollen necks of both monkeys told a tale of hardship and barbarity, and the keeper determined he would do everything in his power to keep their brutal owner from regaining possession of them.

But, needless to say, the organ-grinder never knew where his two pets had got to. On the following day he was discovered almost lifeless and taken to the hospital, and so Kood and Churro were never looked for and never claimed.

And so it came about that Christmas Day brought great joy to the hearts of the poor exiles, for the Monkey-House was warm and comfortable, and they had good food, and all the other monkeys spoke to them very kindly.

"Brother," said Kood, "I think we will stay with this kind master all our lives."

And so, when the keeper came round again, they talked to him in their monkey language, and told him how very much obliged they were to him for his kindness. And he, though he did not understand them, saw that they were happy, and went away content.



AN ARROW ESCAPE.

SOCIETY GOSSIP.

"On Christmas Day Sir Bliffin Blinks went for a long tramp in the country."
Drawn by Tom Browne, R.I.

A BIG ORDER.

Mr. Ourang: "What! Pull out one of them! No fear; I'm a dentist, not a traction engine!"
Drawn by Hall Thorpe.

OLD CIGAR-BOXES AND WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.

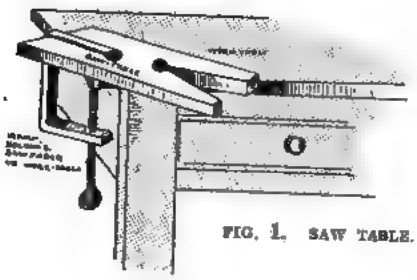


FIG. 1. SAW TABLE.

Written and Illustrated by A. SANDERS.

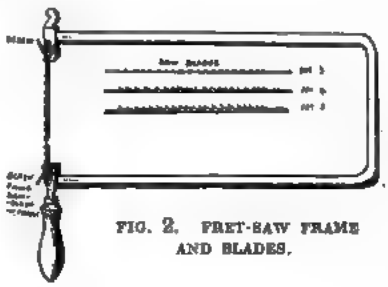


FIG. 2. FRET-SAW FRAME AND BLADES.

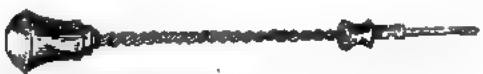


FIG. 3. DRILL FOR BORING HOLES IN THE WOOD.

A HANDSOME gift of a dozen old cigar-boxes found occupation for many a spare half-hour last winter, and some of the results are here handed to our readers.

In the first place, the boxes need to be carefully pulled to pieces, and the nails taken out. All paper should then be washed or soaked off. Any warping can be cured by turning over the wood from time to time while drying. The loose pieces should then be stacked according to size.

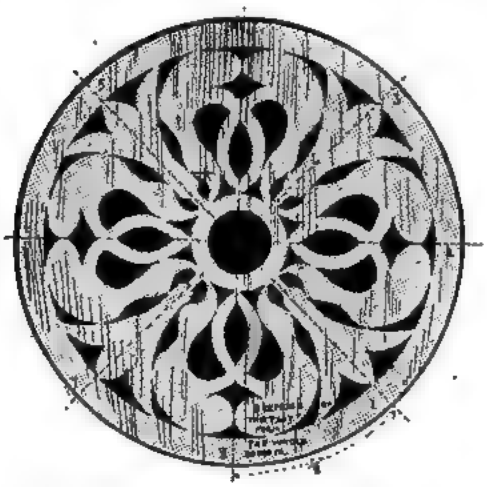


FIG. 4. DESIGN FOR TABLE OR LAMP MAT.

For those who are not acquainted with the noble "Art of Fretwork" we give, in Figs. 1, 2, and 3, illustrations of the apparatus needed.

As the first pattern, we can take either Fig. 4 or Fig. 5. A glance at Fig. 4 will show that the apparently complicated design is merely eight repeats of a few simple lines. The circle and eight divisions can be drawn with compass and ruler, and a tracing of an eighth part made, and traced on to each division in turn, using first one side and then the other. When the "fretting" is

FIG. 5. DESIGN FOR PAPER-KNIFE.

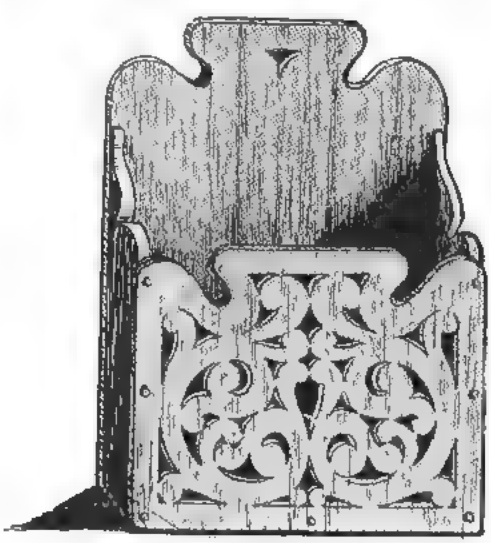


FIG. 6. STATIONERY CASE.

finished, the rough edges should be carefully rubbed down with glass-paper. The paper-knife (Fig. 5) will need a similar treatment with an additional bevelling to make the edges sharp enough for cutting.

Next we beg to introduce to our readers a stationery case and pipe-rack made from cigar-boxes.

Fig. 6 involves a little more carpentry. After the five pieces forming front, back, bottom and two sides have been accurately sawn out, and the front (Fig. 8) fretted, we can put them together as shown (in Fig. 9). It is a good plan to nail the back to the bottom, then slip the sides into position and fasten to bottom and back, and last of all nail on the front. The whole should then be well finished off with glass-paper to remove any untidy edges. This design can be carried a step further by adding a partition (Fig. 7) to make separate compartments for envelopes and paper. The diagram shows how the parts are fitted together. The work is greatly simplified and strengthened by raising the bottom of the front compartment. This should be the first thing to do, then the partition should be nailed to the false bottom, the back fastened to the bottom, and the sides fitted to cover up all edges, and lastly the front nailed over all. This will necessitate allowing a greater width for the front. Finish as in Fig 6.

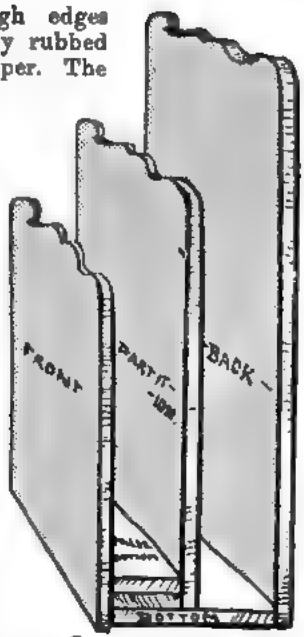


FIG. 7. STATIONERY CASE WITH TWO COMPARTMENTS SHOWING INSIDE ARRANGEMENT.

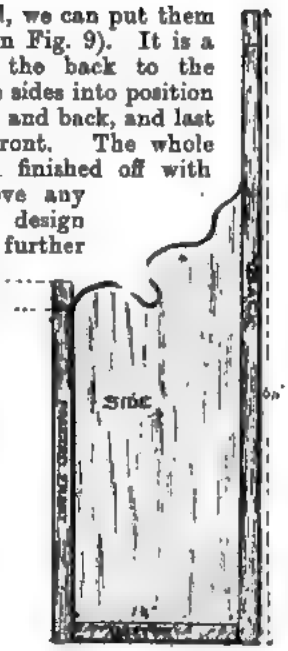


FIG. 9. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE METHOD OF FASTENING TOGETHER THE FRONT, BACK, SIDES AND BOTTOM OF STATIONERY CASE.

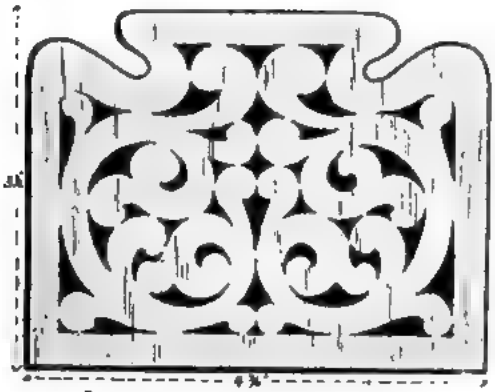


FIG. 8. FRONT DESIGN FOR STATIONERY CASE.

Hammer and nails will come into use for putting together the back, rack and support of the pipe-rack (Fig. 10); after cutting out these several parts, marked A (Fig. 12), B (Fig. 11), and C (Fig. 10), small thin "cigar-box" nails are the best to use. The support B should first of all be nailed to the rack A, driving the nails from the top of the

FIG. 10 (C). DESIGN FOR A PIPE RACK.

FIG. 11 (B). SUPPORT FOR PIPE-RACK.

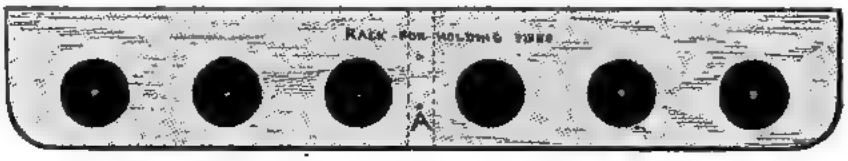


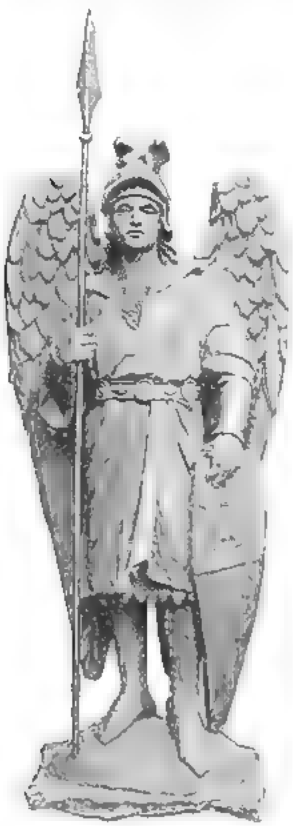
FIG. 12 (A). RACK FOR HOLDING PIPES, TO BE FASTENED TO FIG. 10, AND SUPPORTED BY FIG. 11.

rack A as shown in Fig. 10, thus making it easier to fit to the back (C). It would be as well to test the accuracy of our work with a set square before nailing too firmly. The "knack" of sending the nails straight "home" into the thin wood comes with a little experience, and we may always help matters by choosing the thickest parts of our cigar-wood for supports, racks and other portions of our work into which nails have to be driven.

When complete, our pipe-rack should be well rubbed with glass-paper to give it a nice smooth surface.

A MARLBOROUGH CHALLENGE TROPHY.

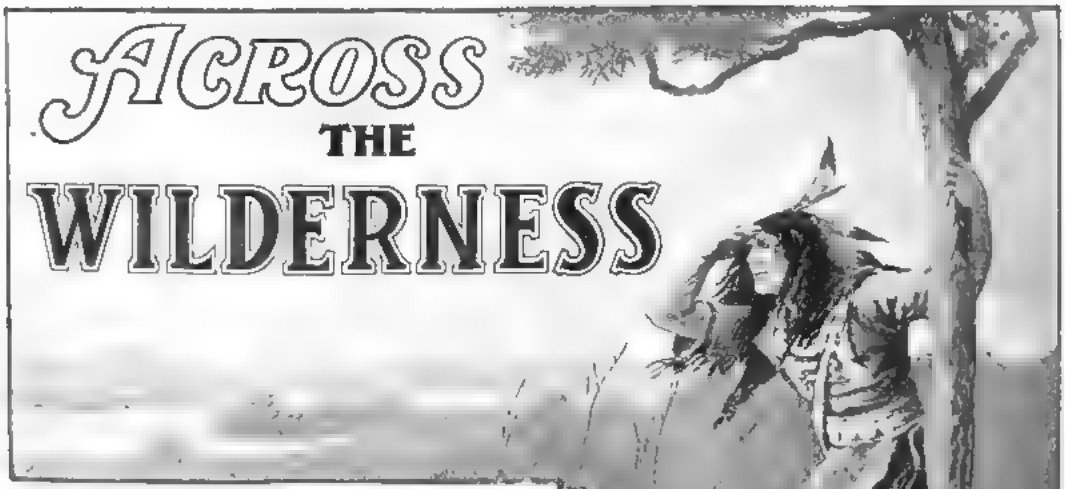
IN recent years many challenge cups and other prizes have been given by liberal Marlburians and other friends for the encouragement of cricket, football, hockey, and other kinds of athletic exercise. There is a keen competition among the Houses for these prizes, especially for the Pollock Shield, given by the present Headmaster of Wellington College, to be held by the House which is most successful in the sports of the year. The marks for these are so arranged that the younger members of a House may help to win the Shield for it. The result is wholesome, as, besides encouraging athletics, such prizes help to diffuse widely a generous feeling of public spirit and loyalty to the Houses. On the other hand, they have increased the tendency to regard excellence in athletics as the chief interest of schoolboy life, and the brainwork as a matter of secondary importance.



Prizes given on the usual lines for school work, while useful to encourage and reward industry, yet have their defects: they stimulate only individual boys, and may beget in them an unwholesome hunger for marks: the honour of the prize affects only the winner, and the competition for it tends to foster a type of character which does not command the admiration and sympathy of companions. Some of these defects might be remedied if into the competition for school prizes we could infuse some of that generous, unselfish public spirit which produces admirable results in some games, athletic exercises, etc. Such were the feelings which led the late Headmaster of Marlborough to offer, as a parting gift to the school, a prize which will be awarded each year just before Prize Day to the House which has gained most distinction in the work of the twelve months preceding; "its merit to be estimated by a scale of marks assigned to the different prizes, scholarships, etc., on the analogy of the mark-scale of the Pollock Shield Competition."

The prize is a bronze statuette, representing St. Michael, designed by Mr. E. Roscoe Mullins, O.M., by whose kind permission we are enabled to reproduce the accompanying photograph. The plinth will bear small shields to receive each year the name of the winning House.

ACROSS THE WILDERNESS



By FRANKLIN WELLES CALKINS.

ETAPA and Zintkala, son and daughter of Fire Cl[illegible] an Ogiala chief, are held in captivity by T[illegible], [illegible] Ojibwa village headman. Taking advantage of a favorable opportunity, one spring day, the boy and girl make a desperate dash for liberty and set off across the wilderness in the direction of their home, eight hundred miles distant. For a time they [illegible] the pursuing Ojibwas, but [illegible] they walk into a trap and find to their [illegible] that they are [illegible] Tall Gun's trailers [illegible] the most cunning Indian [illegible], however, they [illegible] at nightfall when they wad[illegible] into a marsh. After a long period of terror and suffering they reach a [illegible] the opposite side of the marsh, [illegible] hurry on their way. So quick is their progress that they soon forget all about their enemies and [illegible] from their [illegible] has been sighted by an Ojibwa from [illegible] perch in a lofty pine.

CHAPTER XII

A FORTY MILE RUN.

AGAIN a balmy spring morning with no stir of wind, and the woods silent save for the scream of a jay or the chirruping of pine inhabiting birds.

It was nearly sunrise when the voyagers crawled out of their blankets. There were red squirrels in these woods, and, though they were very small, a number of them would make a suitable meal—and so Etapa strung his bow to hunt for them.

"Hoye, sister," he said, "if any birds arrive at these trees, cry out to me, and I will come to shoot them."

He was about to go after the squirrels, when he saw in Zintkala's face the dawning sense of fear and uneasiness, which, for no apparent cause, he himself was beginning to feel. When he finished speaking he failed to move in the direction he had intended. Both children stood in a listening attitude.

Far away and from some distant lake they heard the quavering cry of a loon. Deep within the woods a bluejay shrieked, repeating a trio of screams several times.

What was it suddenly chilled the blood in their veins? Not the cry of the loon nor the whirring call of a crane, dropping from the sky, neither the frantic shriek of the bluejay.

No, it was a stirring of the sixth sense of the wilderness child—the sense of long-range personal contact whereby the magnetic force of one being is acted upon—at surprising distances—by the electric aura of another. Given an undisturbed environment, a perfect condition of the atmosphere, and the "untutored savage" will infallibly discover—long before it is due to

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appear—the approach of a hostile or of a friendly presence.

The enemy! Coming—coming—coming! This was the message, borne upon the still morning air, which reached the consciousness of the little voyagers and froze them in their tracks. They only waited to make certain of the impinging of a hostile force, and then they seized upon their bundles of effects and fled, as certain of pursuit as the deer which flees a baying hound.

They ran as they had never run before, a breathless, skimming, dodging flight, throwing tree trunks, hillocks, bushes behind them, instinctively and unerringly as the partridge flies to foil the gunner's aim.

They heard presently, too, and with scarcely quickened pulse, the baffled and unguarded whoop which announced the discovery of their abandoned camp and their sudden flight therefrom though the Indian's yells might have been intended as a signal, and thus the enemy would arrive in force upon their trail.

On—on—on they fled. Reaching hard, even ground among the tall pines again, they turned at a right-angle to their former course, and ran toward the east, the direction which they might least be expected to take.

The eyes of an eagle, the nose of a fox, these alone could have followed their tracks at the pace they took. In that brief, tense moment before their flight the attitude of all things was changed for them. No bird, beast, tree or rock now offered them its protection; there was another sky and another earth, and the face of Wakinyan himself was turned from them.

They glimpsed furtively at the spaces in front as they sped each tree, each bush, each rock was suspected of hiding an enemy in wait. The aisles of the tall pines were gloomy and threatening spaces, embittering the frightened souls, withholding the atmosphere of protection, giving sweeping views to the hidden foe. With a sense of desolation in the heart, each throbbing, panting little creature fled, seeking any fate whatsoever, save a return to slave captivity - on—on—on—scudding like the hunted hare.

The sun rose high above the tops even of the tallest pines and found them running with scarce abated speed. Noon came—the weary legs still carried them forward, going now at the swinging trot which the hunted man or the chased wolf finds best adapted to a lengthened run.

Now and then they halted at some pool or running brook to quench a raging thirst. They only stopped running when the stout boy, not the slender girl, dropped and from sheer fatigue could not regain his feet.

For eight hours or more they had run to the eastward, a good part of the way over ground clear of undergrowth, through a vast forest of white and Norway pines. The distance they had covered without food would seem incredible to any who have not actual knowledge of the Indian's powers of endurance. A strong adult would have made sixty miles in such a run, and with less fatigue; and it is hazarding nothing of truth to say that Etapa had fallen finally at forty miles or more from their morning's camp.

The voyagers could go no farther. They lay upon their blankets and slept the sleep of exhaustion. The chill night air alone awoke them. Zintkala was first to open her eyes upon the blank darkness of the pine forest. The woods were still, with the silence which can be felt.

Suffering with hunger, but more from fright, the little girl drew her blanket close about her head and shoulders, that she might shut out the black vacant space and its terrors. Thus she sat for a long time with suppressed breathing, a shapeless little bunch which the keenest eye of a night prowler might have passed unnoticed.

Then Etapa awoke and stirred, shivering with cold.

"Tanké!" He spoke in a scared whisper. The "big sister" heard as in a dream and gave no answer. "Tanké!"– this time aloud and with affright.

"I am here," Zintkala answered simply, in a voice muffled in the folds of her blanket. The boy's terror, but not his whole misery, abated.

"I want something to eat," he pleaded. "I am hungry. I suffer very much."

He was again the "little brother" appealing to the wise, older sister for succour. Somewhere within her parfléche, which she had clung to in her long flight, Tanké (older sister or big sister) should have preserved some pieces of all the birds they had cooked. His tone implied as much, and the sister's heart smote her for improvidence, but she answered in the same far-away, indifferent tones:

"I have nothing—there is nothing until Wi gives his light. Thereafter I shall dig some roots, presently."

Then for the first time since the night of their capture Etapa wept. "I want my mother," he said, and cried bitterly for a long time. The sister sat in silence, while the hitherto stout-hearted boy, lost within the vast wilderness, a thousand miles from his own Oglala village, bone-weary, shivering, half-starved and desperate, gave way to his grief.

At length, out of fear, Zintkala spoke. She hitched herself toward the weeper, and laid her face against his.

"Younger brother," she murmured, "do not cry thus loudly. Heretofore you have not wept,

and now I fear some wicked wolves may come to devour us."

This admonition checked the boy's crying aloud. His head fell forward upon his sister's lap, and he sobbed himself asleep while she warmed his shoulders with her blanket.

The little girl felt worn and old—oh, so old! All her muscles were stiff and sore, and, in the miseries of hunger and the ache of bones, she forgot her terrors of the unknown, and so kept a weary vigil until daylight came.

THEY RAN AS THEY HAD NEVER RUN BEFORE.

Gaunt, hollow of cheek and hollow of eye and limping painfully, the little voyagers took up their march so soon as they could see among the dim aisles of the trees. They were still within the depths of a great pine forest—the greatest of all the northland. They travelled now—in such fashion as they could—toward the south, again finding their course from the source whence the sun's light came.

Deep draughts of cold water, at the first pool they came to, revived their lagging vitality for a time, and they pressed on more eagerly, looking for squirrels or grouse or even some small birds to shoot, or perchance to discover the dead top of some edible root.

But they looked in vain. They had penetrated into the heart of a forest lacking in insect and vegetable life, and therefore shunned of the life which preys upon life. There was only growth-room for the sky-scraping trees. The children in this desperate strait gathered and chewed, occasionally, bits of resin and the seed scales of the pine cone. These served, in a small measure, to appease the incessant gnaw of hunger.

After several hours of walking, however, hunger so asserted itself that they might even have surrendered themselves to Lizbet's clutches for a mouthful of meat. If by going in that direction they could have been assured of finally getting out of these gloomy pine woods and into the land of game again, they would readily have travelled toward Tall Gun's village. Not knowing, they kept on toward the south, or as nearly so as occasional glimpses of the shifting sun would permit. They ceased to look for game or roots, but stumbled on with ears open for signs of life in some outer world. But neither whistle of wing nor honk of goose fell out of the still sky.

At midday, both exhausted, they fell upon the ground and slept again. Thus they were enabled to rest for two or three hours, forgetting the pangs of hunger. And again they plodded on, and in a little time were overjoyed to discover the glimmer of a lake in their front. But they were astonished and further disheartened, in coming upon its rocky shore line, to see no signs of life—just a placid deep blue sheet of water hemmed with interminable lines of cloud-touching trees. A pair of loons were

finally sighted, the sun glimmering upon their flapping wings far out in the centre of the lake.

Although they scrambled wearily among the rocks to look down into deep waters, there were no fish to be seen. The only animal they found upon this lakeshore was a huge turtle, upon a flat stone, getting the sun's heat upon its back, and which craned its neck in amazement at the unwonted noise of their approach.

This edible creature they might easily have secured, and, with the aid of knife and hatchet, have gained an abundant supply of food. But it did not occur to them to kill it, for the turtle was the taboo of their race and they would no sooner have eaten of its flesh than of their own.

They passed hopelessly round this desert lake and again were about to drop from exhaustion when they came upon a tiny inlet. In the shallow water of this brook they saw some small, sickly looking fish.

Instantly, with all faculties alert, the voyagers set their cunning to match that of the finny ones. They could only get these little fish by a strategic surround. To this end they shed moccasins and leggings, and prepared to sacrifice their blankets to a wetting.

Zintkala went above to get securely round the fish, while Etapa stopped in the brook below. The boy weighted two corners of his blanket with stones and also laid some small weights about the centre so that one-half or more of its surface was submerged, and the whole quite blocked the brook's narrow channel.

Thus prepared he awaited eagerly the movements of his sister. Zintkala also tied stones in the corners of her blanket. Holding this before her so as to sweep the bed of the creek, she walked slowly and cautiously down the stream. Soon the little fishes, six or seven of them, were fairly cornered between the improvised drag-nets. A sudden easy swoop of the boy's fish trap captured four of the finny ones, and the others escaped in a swift flight into the lake.

These thin, small fish, half-roasted on a smokeless blaze of dry twigs, were barely sufficient to stay the keenest pangs of hunger, and Etapa was too nearly exhausted—he shivered miserably from his wetting in the brook—to attempt further travel, fishing or hunting.

Something, in the bones perhaps, told them they must, at all hazards, rest by a warm fire until another morning. A huge dead pine, uprooted by a wind, lay across the brook. To this they repaired and made a camp. Zintkala regarded her shivering brother furtively and with solicitude. She built a hot fire against the log and bade him sit close to the blaze while she staked their blankets on either hand to dry.

This was quite a reckless proceeding in view of the persistent chase of Tall Gun's Ojibwas, but the pinch of hunger, cold, or illness shuts out other considerations. Zintkala knew that if the Ojibwa possessed the skill and patience they had shown as far as the camp in the sand hills, nothing now could save herself and Etapa from capture. If they had, as was equally probable, given over the chase upon discovering the wary flight from that camp, there could be no necessity for extreme caution. The voyagers had done their utmost to foil and to outrun the Rara-tonwan, and the evil spirit had prevailed thus far. It remained to see what might yet happen

CHAPTER XIII.

Etapa Falls Sick.

ETAPA slept for a time, while the blankets were drying. He awoke hollow-cheeked and heavy of eye. "Why do you not sleep?" he asked

"The wicked wolves might come," the sister suggested, "and—and the fire will keep those evil ones away."

"Then I shall keep the fire. I have had enough sleep," he said. "I am not any more hungry."

This was a bad sign, and Zintkala looked at her brother uneasily. But she had nothing to oppose to his suggestion, and so wrapped herself in her blanket.

When she awoke the sun had arisen, and she found Etapa, with a strange flush upon his face, stumbling along the brook toward the lake. She called after him to know what he would do, and, as he did not answer, she hurried on to inquire. It seemed that he wished to find some fish for her breakfast. He was not hungry, he said, but older sister must be very much in want of food

"Come," said Zintkala, "I will do without food. Let us go on quickly to some open country."

The brother yielded without remark and again they took up their journey. Etapa disclaimed hunger, but he had a strange feeling at the pit of his stomach which caused him to draw in his belt until he resembled some giant, ambling insect.

It was mid-forenoon when the plodding and nearly lifeless children came at last out of the lifeless woods. Suddenly they emerged into a world of plenty, upon the shores of a great lake so wide as to reach to a far, unbroken horizon. This lake was flecked with herds of water-fowl. There was a wall of sand and a wide sand

beach as far as the eye could reach along the shore line.

The woods were small and again there were wild pigeons, grouse and squirrels in abundance. But all this life now mocked at the Dakota boy, for when he had succeeded in stringing his bow he had not strength to bend it for a shot. He made several unsuccessful efforts, and then looked at his sister with a drawn and pitiful face.

"Rest, brother," she said. "Lie upon these sands and I will go to dig some roots." She drank a great deal of cold water and then took her knife and went into the woods. She could shoot with the bow and arrow, but not well enough to hit birds unless they were very close indeed. So she betook herself to the resort of a hungry Indian woman, who will find roots and berries where all others fail to find them.

"I must look also for medicine roots," said Zintkala to herself, thus compelled to admit that Etapa was ill or about to become so. She found the dead leaves and stems of many plants strange to her; but when she dug and tasted them they seemed neither medicine nor good to eat.

After a time, however, in a well-shaded spot among some young, hardwood trees, she found the dry foliage of some plants which she recognised as belonging to a delicious kind of root which the Ojibwa had dug during her march with them in autumn.

The plants were ginseng, and Zintkala used her knife eagerly in uprooting them. She found quite a quantity, and they were waśte-śte—good, good. She scraped the earth from several large pieces of root and ate them ravenously. Anything which tasted good could not fail to allay the fearful gnaw of hunger.

She thrilled with the thought that these roots might make a good medicine for Etapa, and so she passed out of the woods on to the beach to make haste in getting back to him. As she walked over a slope of gravel and loose stones her eyes fell upon a heap of freshly opened clam-shells, and near at hand she saw tracks of mato-sapa upon the sands. So the bear had found many clams. These were not much eaten by her people, but she knew that hungry folk sometimes ate great quantities of them raw.

So she dropped her roots, stripped her feet, and waded among the stones to explore. Clams, and big ones, were indeed plentiful, and she had no difficulty in securing all she wished.

Then, without waiting to clothe her feet, her eye sought the line of beach until it fell upon a little grey object lying in the sunshine under a wall of sand. Making certain that Etapa slept, she seated herself, and, cracking the shells of clams between two stones, devoured the tough but edible molluscs until she had, as nearly as she dared, appeased her hunger. Doubtless no epicure of modern days ever tickled his palate with "Little Necks" of a more delicious flavour. They were fat clams of the full-fed sort found in lakes which abound in vegetable and animal life.

Etapa was sleeping heavily when Zintkala reached him, and she did not wake him at once, for she wished him to rest and then to have some clams, roasting hot. So she made a fire and, while the clams were baking, she built a "sweat house" by digging a pit with a draught, lighting a fire within, and piling some large stones upon the burning wood.

Then she woke Etapa and put roast clams, nicely opened with her knife, before him. But his hunger had gone. He ate one or two of the brown lumps because she urged him. But his face was burning, his eyes shone with a strange light, and he complained of pains in his head and side.

So, when the stones in the pit were sufficiently heated, the sister laid poles on them and made the boy sit over them while she folded parflèche and blankets about him and piled sand upon the edges so as to retain the heat.

The Dakotas, like other people, are divided upon social and religious customs and practices. A class, nearly always those of larger natural abilities, have little or no faith in their conjurers and medicine-men. Many diseases are known to them, in a way, and they go about curing them with such genuine remedies as nature provides. Zintkala's people—on both sides—were of this sort. The cures which they had faith in were largely of the well directed powers, sweating, herbs, dieting, and many simple and universal remedies.

Therefore Zintkala did not wish for a wakan-wicasa (medicine-man) to treat her brother with his drummings, his chantings and his mummeries. The little doctress gave her patient a thorough sweating, then raked away the ashes of her cooking fire and made him lie upon the heated sands rolled tightly in blankets.

Then, tired though she was, she selected a shelving, sunny bank against the lake wall of sand and proceeded to build a wickiup. Against the scarp of the wall she began operations, digging away the slope with a clamshell to make a level spot, yet pulling down dry sand finally for her floor. Then she took Etapa's hatchet and attacked some young growth near at hand. She drove two crotched stakes and laid a pole upon them parallel with the top of the bank, laying sticks thickly across from this pole and again slanting from the pole to the ground

beneath. A cross pole and more sticks enclosed an end of the structure, and the other was left open for entrance and exit. The roof of this framework she covered thickly with young pine boughs, thatching them cunningly with vines and strips of tough bark.

By the time the energetic little maiden had her roof finished night was coming on. So she built a swift fire of dry leaves and sticks upon the floor of her wickiup until the sands were heated. Then she raked out the embers, awoke Etapa, half dragged and half persuaded the stupor-ridden lad inside, and put him to bed with a parflèche drawn over his feet and another about his shoulders.

Fortunately for this small nurse and her plans, spring comes quickly in the northland. The weather had come on warm; buds were swelling upon the trees; bluebirds, thrushes, and other warblers sang joyously, with promise of summer, among the small woods. And the sun sank in a great red glory beneath the waters of the lake.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Little Nurse.

ZINTKALA built a large fire at the opening of her wickiup. She dragged a number of dry limbs in place and chopped them into faggots, for the air was yet chill after nightfall, and she wished to keep a fire going until morning.

It was after midnight, and Etapa was yet breathing heavily, when the little nurse composed herself to sleep with only a parflèche covering for her shoulders. She slept until the sun was shining, when Etapa in delirium awoke her with his mutterings. She knew that he wandered in mind, for he said things which were witko (foolish and incoherent).

She rebuilded her fire and sat near her patient with a great fear in her heart. With an almost fierce insistence, however, the little girl shut out of her mind a thought of the end which might come to such illness. Such fevers were frequent among the Indians, but with the violent sort they were ill-prepared to contend. So, despite her brave spirit, the sister listened with a pinched face and heavy heart to the brother's mutterings and watched his restless tossing, well understanding how powerless she was to do for him. After a dark hour of despair, Etapa again fell into a deep sleep.

Then his nurse aroused to action. She ate a hasty breakfast of baked clams, then very carefully passed some thongs around the boy's ankles and tied them so that he might not get

ZINTKALA PUT HIM TO BED WITH A PARFLÈCHE DRAWN OVER HIS FEET AND ANOTHER OVER HIS SHOULDERS.

Google

up and run off in one of his witko moments. Then she took her knife and his hatchet and went to the woods. Diligently she searched for the roots and herbs known to use in her mother's family. There was as yet no green vegetation, and her search was tedious in the extreme, compelling her to dig much under the dry leaves and stems of such weeds and wood plants as the melting snows or the wild creatures had left undisturbed.

At last she chanced upon a bed of mandrakes, and her face lighted with a great joy. Ah, this was indeed waśte-śte (very, very good)! She dug many of the roots. With these and some freshly peeled bark of the wild cherry she returned to her wickiup.

She looked in upon her patient with anxiety. He was sitting up with fevered face, sullenly trying to untie the thongs about his feet. She assisted him, and, after walking about upon the sands with unsteady legs for a moment, he came back to his couch and turned his face to the bank.

Zintkala now took her basin and two extra large clamshells, and shaved into these receptacles small bits of the root and bark she had gathered. She longed for some of the bitter sage leaves from her mother's bundle of dried herbs. But there was no sage bush in all this northland, and so she did what she could with what she had.

She set her dishes, filled with water, upon some stones which she had placed to heat upon the embers of her fire. She knew the roots and bark must not be freely boiled, and arranged her dishes so as to keep the water gently simmering She now fished for clams, and it was a long time after she had roasted some molluscs and eaten them before her teas were bitter enough for medicine.

Etapa would not eat, although she urged him, hoping to thus prove to herself that his illness was not a serious matter. She was encouraged in that he did not get violent and beyond her control. In one of his rational moments, after a time, she succeeded in getting him to drink, with a wry face, a basin of mandrake tea. After this he again fell into a stupor of sleep.

Zintkala kept her brews going, setting away in shelter clamshells filled with bitter teas until she had enough to last for hours. Then, knowing that her patient was too weak to wander off, she went to look for food. She was tired of the tough clams.

In a little exploring expedition she discovered a marsh bayou where many large fish were to be seen feeding among the reeds in shallow water. Ehé-ho! Here was good meat in plenty. She affixed her long knife to a pole and went spearing. After some adventures, and several hard struggles, she succeeded in killing two large catfish, and lugged them to her wickiup in triumph. Her elation in this exploit would have been very great but for the anxious heart she bore.

Oddly enough, it was but a little time after she had dressed these fish and hung the meat upon curing sticks that she found three unsuspected fishhooks in her own roll of belongings. The hooks were concealed within a bundle of coloured threads and pieces of trader's twine, which she undid to further her mending. This was great good fortune, for she was an expert fisher and the possession of these cunning little weapons settled the question of food supply where there were fish to be caught.

Most of that day she sat upon the sands in the sunshine mending clothes, leggings and moccasins. Rents in her jeep (skirt) she darned by sewing in soft pieces of buckskin, ornamenting them with stitches of red and blue packthreads. This occupation was varied with brief visits to the invalid, who was several times induced to drink of her bitter teas. All day the boy lay, burning with fever, taking no nourishment but water and the bitter drinks.

Upon the sister there settled at length that strange aloofness and preoccupation which seizes upon the Indian, as a defence against the ravages of emotion, in times of suffering and grief.

Zintkala spent a busy day. Among other work, she finished thatching her wickiup, which thus became a prominent feature of the immediate beach, an oval hummock setting its vivid green against the sand wall. She went about all these duties with the intent air of a small housekeeper.

After the sun had set redly, falling into the water, clouds obscured the stars, and, as darkness came on, a red sky light appeared across the lake, a cloud glow which her vision—associated with many prairie fires—could not mistake. The red sky meant a forest fire across the water. Woods were burning there, and the lake was not as wide as it had appeared. And there were people over there, too. As night advanced the dash of scarlet upon the clouds became a broad band, and its ruby light was reflected upon the ripples of the lake until beach and shore line were visible as by moonlight.

Zintkala was not sleepy. She sat in the opening of her wickiup for a long time looking out upon the wonder world of fire-lit night and with the fascination of a child of whatsoever complexion. The now dancing ripples, the white birds and the dark ones with the fire's glow upon them, the far-seen herds of fowl moving in a red dusk like war-parties of horsemen going upon a level plain to strike their

enemies, all the curiously peopled water-world, held her imagination.

It was not a still world, neither of woods nor lake. Out of the sky came now and then the reed-like piercing laugh of the loon, the bugle note of the arctic-going swan, the harsh squawk of the night heron, and, from the tree-tops near at hand, two owls mocked at the puddling ducks which presently they intended to pounce upon.

Once, startlingly close, a crackling of bushes caught the watcher's ear, and brought her heart fluttering into her throat. At last the Ojibwa! But no, a dark hulk moving upon four legs came out upon the sands and she understood that mato-sapa had come to his clam fishery. She shrank within the door of her tepée and peered fearfully forth.

SHE RAN TO HIM IN A GREAT FRIGHT.

The king of the woods, it appeared, was not hungry. He simply wallowed in shallow water, rolling himself about like an agency pig, and then shuffled away into his bushes. Once only he lifted his head and stood at gaze, appearing to be mildly interested in her domicile against the sand wall.

Once Etapa spoke asking for water, and again, after she had given him a drink and fallen asleep, he awoke her with the persistent cry. He drank more greedily than before. Lacking desire to sleep, Zintkala again sat in the opening of the wickiup. And while she looked out over the water and upon the red sky, lo, a wonder happened. It began with forked lightning which paled the fire's glow, and then a far-off deep mutter shook the earth, announcing the approach of the thunder birds. These vast and powerful creatures came nearer and ate up the fire in the sky. They played upon the water with their brilliant forked tongues, and the waves began to lash the rocks and sands and the wind to roar in the trees, and, in the crackling tumult of their wings and the blinding light of the bolts they shot, terror seized upon the little brown girl. She forgot her patient and cowered, her head wrapped in a parflèche, in the darkest corner of her wickiup.

Though the rain fell down in bucketfuls, and the waves rolled high, and the wind howled the wicked song of Unk-té-hí, no harm came to the little voyagers, who, so well was the wickiup lodged and thatched, were not even wetted.

In the morning Etapa was at the height of his fever. He raged and tossed and muttered strange things. He was quite out of his head. The little nurse went about with compressed lips. She cooked several pieces of fish. "He will be very hungry this morning," she said. She set a basin of the broiled catfish at the side of his couch; and then went out and ate her morning meal, sitting with her back to the

wickiup. When she had finished she went in and took away the basin, pretending that Etapa had eaten most of the fish. She threw the contents of the dish among the bushes, saying to some birds that they could have what was left. Then she set about brewing bitter teas again. This herb drink she gave to the sufferer in large doses when he cried out for water, and at midday he again fell into a heavy sleep.

The day was very warm and pleasant. Many large flocks of water-fowl left the lake and flew northward, honking and squalling with much uproar and fuss.

Seeing that Etapa was not likely to awake soon, his nurse cut a slender pole and with hook and line and some fresh clams went fishing at the bayou. The big pike and pickerel snapped at her tempting baits so greedily that they almost frightened her, and she returned with as many as she could carry

When she came to the heap of clamshells, she left two of her fish upon the stones. "They are for you, O mato-sapa," she said, turning toward the bushes and addressing the bear quite as though the animal were facing her. "Perhaps you will see that my heart is good, and thus you will not enter my tepée."

The Indian child speaks always the language of its elders, and, if it be not stupid or lacking in brain quality, will, at eight or ten years, have attained a vocabulary capable of more effective speech than the average child of similar age among English-speaking people.

At ten Zintkala had been accomplished in her own tongue; in five months at a missionary school she had learned enough of English to converse with her teachers about ordinary matters, and six months' tutelage among the Ojibwa, in a tongue differing as widely from her own as Latin from Hindustani, she had learned to speak Chippewa readily.

When she again turned toward the wickiup Etapa was outside staggering and stumbling, making a half-crazed effort to reach the water. She ran to him in a great fright, for she thought that now he was surely witko and about to become violent. Partly carrying, and partly forcing him to walk, she got him back to his couch and supplied his wants with bitter drinks.

That night Zintkala hardly slept, and for three days thereafter Etapa required her constant care, giving her only snatches of rest. The patient was violent at times, and it required all her strength to keep him within the wickiup.

During this time she ate only the fish which she had partly cured and preserved, and made but one excursion to the woods after roots and cherry bark for her brews. On this occasion she had the good fortune to kill a rabbit, which she hit with a stone. This game she dressed and hung near the fire to make soup for Etapa. Some of this, very weak, she gave him when he craved water.

On the sixth morning of his illness, when, upon awakening from a better sleep than she had had in several days, the little nurse no longer heard her patient's heavy breathing, but saw an emaciated figure with face turned away, with blanket unmoved where she had last tucked it round his feet, she caught her breath with a little gasp and ran outside, not daring to look at the features of that still one.

Distrait and wild-eyed, she wandered for a time. She gazed far across the lake where the fire had burned, and where, upon the horizon line, a mere speck, she had one day seen a canoe pass. There were people, there was a village over there, and she almost made herself believe that she ought at once to go round the lake and find these folk. Maybe their medicine-man, like Ghost Moccasin of Tall Gun's village, was a very great wonder-worker. Perhaps such a wonderful one would come and cure Etapa.

She raced away from the spectre in her mind. She hastened to the pool of the bayou to see if there were indeed fish swimming there.

Then she turned her attention to the great white herds of pelicans upon the lake. All the wild geese and many of the droves of ducks had vanished, but it did not occur to her to wonder where they had gone. She kept her eyes upon the immense white birds with big red pouches under their bills. She thought that she should have one of those pouches. They were very convenient. She had heard that the birds carried fish in them.

Yet something kept saying to her that she must go back to the wickiup go back—go back go back.

She hurried along the beach; her little feet stumbled among the stones; her breath, now suppressed, again came and went in spasmodic gasps; a strange misty world danced in her eyes, a tattoo of drums throbbed in her ears.

She approached the wickiup with halting steps and wavering eyes; her small round face was pinched and bloodless, white as one of the dead. Some compelling force drew her to the opening. She peered inside. Ah, waste-ste! The sick one had moved -his thin face was turned partly toward her!

She bent over him with all her soul in her face. One look and her energies and faculties returned in a single throb. She flew outside, uncovered the embers of her fire, snatched her basin and ran for water. A large leg of the rabbit! This she had saved for a nourishing broth. Ah, Etapa must very quickly take some

of her soup. He would like it; he would drink it eagerly perhaps. He must now be very hungry—they were always so. All her energies were concentrated upon the cooking of that broth, with nursing it with just enough of fire. She had a bit of salt and that she put in to make it very good indeed.

In a brief time she was bending above her scarcely breathing patient, clamshell spoon and dish in hand, and when the weak boy made a little strangling noise in his throat she almost laughed. When she saw that he had really swallowed two mouthfuls of broth, and that his hollow eyes had opened, and he seemed to know her, she glowed with energy, a little dynamo of nature to give to the weak one life and strength.

Two or three times, within a little while, she succeeded in getting her patient to swallow broth, and then, to her great delight, he fell into a soft and natural sleep.

CHAPTER XV.

Going to the Enemy.

VIOLENT fevers of the swamp and woods are emaciating and usually leave the system deranged for a time. Etapa did not mend rapidly, and, though after some days he was able to walk about, it was evident that he would not be strong enough to travel for a long time. He resembled only the half-animated framework of the stout boy who had escaped from the sugar-camp.

He no longer spoke of going homeward. He seemed content to be provided for, to lie upon the sands and watch the white herds of pelicans. The sister saw how it was, and she pondered the matter gravely. Twice she had seen an elongated speck, almost upon the rim of the sky, move across the lake from a far-off headland On one or two still, clear mornings, also, there were smoke indications hazing the sky above a dimly seen shore line of bluff and woods. That there was a large village in that direction she could have no doubt, and somehow she had arrived at the conclusion that the people were a peaceful sort of folk, who lived in a wonderful land of plenty and were generous to friends and strangers alike.

True, these people might not feel kindly toward those of the Dakota nation, but it seemed quite certain to her that they were not a cruel folk, on the look-out to do others harm, or they would have discovered and set upon her little camp long since. The Ojibwas of Tall Gun's village were almost forgotten, so distant was their country and so long it seemed since her escape from them.

She remembered that once in her home village a young Pawnee—a Scili had thrown himself upon the mercy of the Oglalas. He had been lost, and had come upon their tepées in a violent snowstorm. This young man had been well received. He stayed with his benefactors many moons, hunting faithfully for them during the buffalo-killing season, and then returned, unmolested, to his own people.

So Zintkala determined to seek the strangers across the lake and ask for hospitality for a season.

She now used her buckskins—the parfêche and loose skins—making moccasins and garments and in mending. She had much coloured packthread and some pretty beads among her pickings, and she fashioned herself an overskirt of Sioux pattern which she ornamented with many fringes. When she had donned this skirt, her elk-teeth necklace and some real Dakota leggings and moccasins, she felt as much like some genuine person as a Sioux waif might in that wilderness.

In these days of Etapa's slow recovery Zintkala took on new life and capability. She was the camp's fisher and hunter, and her larder was well supplied with fresh fish and duck's eggs, upon which diet, and a daily swim in the lake, she throve as a healthy animal. Her plump, round face and snapping black eyes glowed with animation.

She did not after that one time see mato-sapa, who, it seemed, preferred a more solitary haunt. Yet some creature, which left strange tracks upon the wet sands, came one night and stole fish which she had hung to a pole for safe keeping. Thereafter for a time she kept her meat in the wickiup, and still the marauder came regularly, eating the fishheads which she threw upon the beach and leaving those queer tracks all about her domicile.

Then she hit upon the expedient of carrying her refuse out to the heap of clamshells, and there the strange creature came and devoured it. She again hung a fish upon the cross-stick she had arranged, and that same night, when the moon was shining, she was awakened by a snapping sound as of a fagot broken across the knee. Peering out, she saw a black creature, about the size of a common dog, eating her fish.

More angered than alarmed, she seized Etapa's bow and arrows and discharged a shaft with all her might at the range of a dozen paces. The animal was hit in the neck and sprang high with a fierce whistling snarl. It whirled about and about upon the sands, growling and striking at the slender shaft which had gone through its throat, and then, making curious leaps along the beach, disappeared from sight.

On the following morning the voyagers found

a big brown carcajou lying dead upon the sands near the bayou. When she saw what a savage creature she had slain Zintkala was almost as much frightened as elated. The body was so heavy that all her strength was required to drag it to the wickiup. Etapa praised her skill in shooting. "How, big sister," he said, "that was indeed well done. Now you shall make me a chief's garment."

THE ANIMAL WAS HIT IN THE NECK AND SPRANG HIGH WITH A FIERCE WHISTLING SNARL.

With what strength he had, the boy helped his sister to take off the carcajou's skin. It was a beautiful pelt, and they left a very pretty black bush of tail pendant.

Zintkala at once set about fleshing this fine skin in readiness for tanning, which process was completed by aid of wood ashes, fresh brains, and by much rubbing with the hands. The fur was long and thick, of dark brown, with two bands of cinnamon, and, when she had sewed the flaps of the forelegs into sleevelets, Etapa was truly furnished with a "chief's garment," which he wore hanging down his back with the tail ornament brushing his heels. And the Sioux children thought it a very beautiful dress. Zintkala was so struck with the wearer's appearance —despite his thin face and pipe-stem legs—that she immediately set about ornamenting the turned-down head-piece and his moccasins with what remained of her beads.

It was more than half a moon after Etapa had

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been taken with the fever before they left the invalid's quarters and took up their journey along the eastern coast of the lake. In all this time no human being had been seen, only the far specks of canoes. There was, however, the warm, blossoming, spring-inhabited world which catered for all their needs except the longing for home. They did not hurry in their departure, for Etapa was far from strong, and Zintkala carried the small burden of their belongings.

The sister had said nothing to the brother of her plan of going to the strange people. She did not wish to seem to think him unwell and that he might not be able, for a long time, to travel a great distance. The length of the way homeward was only measurable in her mind by recollections of the seasons of her travels away from the Oglala country. She guessed that it would require two moons of walking for them to reach their home, and she now felt that they might have to wait until another melting of the snow.

Zintkala had developed physical strength with self-reliance, and she carried her pack, hatchet, basin, bows and arrows, a leaf or two of dried fish, a bundle of pieces of skin and thread, with lightfooted ease.

As they made their way along the lakeshore, walking wherever they could upon the sand and gravel beaches, Zintkala often said, "Stay, younger brother, I think there are some of the sweet roots" (ginseng) "in this wood. I will go a little way to dig it," or "Whi! śunkaku! Let us have the eggs of maga-win. I saw her fly from those reeds."

Thus, while the lad rested without seeming to rest, Zintkala would go exploring. Sometimes she found the nest of a goose or duck upon a muskrat's conical dwelling among the rushes, but the eggs were no longer good to eat, as a glance at their shiny shells easily convinced the wader.

The children had grown weary of seeing the great herds of pelicans which floated at lazy ease day and night, and the loons and grêbe everywhere specking the water, but there had lately arrived a myriad of new birds, piping creatures of spindle legs and slender necks, with feather dress of browns, drabs, grays, and whites, which continually ran upon the sands or flew back and forth along the beach.

These birds, of several varieties new to them, excited their wonder and comment. One small variety was seen in places in immense numbers. These were stupid, nodding little birds which settled in clouds at the water's edge and almost ran under the voyagers' feet.

"Hoye, sister," said Etapa, when their curiosity had been satisfied by observation, "shoot arrows among these little birds. Shoot the war-arrows, thus," and he showed her how she could skip an arrow low down along the water's edge, without danger of losing.

The ruse was successful. Zintkala tried several shots before getting the range and the level well, then a single arrow knocked over four of the birds, and afterwards she killed them at will. They found these small snipes delicious when the breasts were broiled, and Etapa ate heartier at midday than he had done since falling ill.

Toward night they passed round a bluff bank to descend again upon a very wide sand-walled beach. Upon this broad belt of shore line, as evening came on, they saw a number of deer come down to drink, and once a cow moose and her yellow-headed calf trotted away in their front.

As Etapa had slept a long time after the midday meal, they travelled but a little way that afternoon. They camped at the mouth of a sedgy creek where there were many ducks' nests, and here Zintkala secured fresh eggs enough for the evening's and morning's meals.

The second day's slow travel was very much a repetition of the first, save that it rained a part of the day and they spent several hours in the shelter of a cliff of rocks. During the afternoon the dim southern shore line which they had seen very indistinctly from the wickiup took clear shape as a bold bluff which seemed to extend far out into the lake. The foot of this high land they reached before sunset and camped in the shelter of some bushes under a rise. Here there was a plain path made by fishermen and hunters coming off the bluff to the lakeshore. It was very evident that there was a large village near at hand.

When Etapa saw the path he pointed to it inquiringly, but said nothing, and Zintkala said nothing that evening. At sunrise they had broiled snipe and a fish for their breakfast; then Zintkala set about making such toilet as she could, having no coloured earths to paint her cheeks. She combed and braided her hair with much care, and, at the point of her elk-teeth necklace, she fastened the scarlet wings of a bird which a hawk had killed.

Etapa looked on without comment. He understood that they were to approach the strange village. He was listless and unable to offer serious objections had it occurred to him to do so. He donned his carcajou skin and put a feather in his braid to denote that he had struck an enemy, and so made an end of his toilet.

Thus arrayed, they went forward upon the bluff.

(To be continued.)

A CHRISTMAS ESSAY.

CHRISTMAS does not consist only of Christmas Day, but of a few days before and many after—such, at any rate, is the case in a proper English home. People start Christmas Day in the usual way, and we keep on going, a kind of cross between Sunday and bank-holiday, until we settle down at 6 p.m. to the feeding part of it. I like going to Church at Christmas here as I am fond of beautiful singing and really fine preaching, which argues with your sense and convinces you by its sterlingness. My parcels are all done up overnight with little ends of string, the kind you have saved, though it takes you ten minutes sometimes, just because you won't waste the string. My few odd garments also are put aside ready for delivery, and a pair or two of boots. Boots are such expensive things to buy when money is rather hard to get: and often they only mildew in the corner of your room, as they may be a bit worn over at the side and, perhaps, have a patch or two. Well, they are the boots that should be done up in a parcel and called for by the home where the money is slack in turning up. Don't forget that, with your boots and other garments; it's a good way of starting Christmas. I could easily give you the names of some homes which would willingly house any such oddments. Again, you can quite easily start clubs for boys with gear that is no longer any use to you, footballs, stumps, bats, etc. But enough of this; only, there are homes where money is scarce, and the 6 p.m. meal drifts on and on and sometimes drifts right away and never comes.

As for Church, it is especially nice at Christmas-time with holly and evergreens, especially if there is dry snow. I believe in praying a good honest boy's prayer over something you understand, like a game or for the sort of weather you want. This is not irreverent unless you do not understand. If you start thinking this way, it's wonderful how you go to the place where you can pray your "ewe-lamb" prayer best. Very often, when you get to the Church, if it's a well-thought-out Church, and pray hard about your "ewe-lamb," that it may have a comfortable fold, then somehow the boys' voices sound so nice, and the organ so deep and magnificent, and you begin to think of other lambs besides your own, and you really do seem to try in your mind that there may be Peace on Earth and Goodwill Towards Men. You forget that you began to pray that you might win a cup-tie, and it's when you have forgotten that that Church really does you good. Anyhow, this is what has happened to me, and it is useless writing what does not happen to you. Any one who reads Barrie can see that.

About the days round about Christmas much might be written. But I will take as an example what I think was my fullest day of this kind. We took a 'bus and went to South Kensington Museum. I was a boy again going birds'-nesting and roaming among the forest trees, with the real things before me of which, alas! so many only read in books. I was out for what a boy so really loves, and what he will sin for, if the love of it is really strong enough in his nature—adventure and romance.

Big game, the stealthy cat-like walk of the stately lion, the elephant on whose back K. S. Ranjitsinhji might have ridden in his own country with diamond-studded gear (to be

stolen later on), sparkling in the sun. The elephant is now only a skeleton, but what is that to the healthy mind? Why, you can clothe the elephant in diamonds and all, absolutely at once. Then comes the shot at that great elephant through the sugar canes, and the pause, when it is only wounded, and goes mad with fury. Then where do I go? For I shot at it! Among the trees and grass near the skeleton. This is really all true to me because I am young and can see. This is only one thing. I go to Scotland with the white hares and ptarmigan. Also I have much trouble with the gnat that kills in West Africa. No wonder, when you see it magnified and drawn large to scale. Again, I take as my own the wonderful little clay horses; they are alive, the little bays and chestnuts, with the broad sloping shoulders. On them I win races; they are Sceptres to me. All this takes much longer to happen than to write, though in time it does not occupy more than half-an-hour.

Upstairs there are gorillas and every kind of ape and monkey. They have blue faces and grimy teeth, and are very much like some men you see. Is there anything in this world to stop you thinking anything awful you like of what those blue-faced creatures will do to you? Romance! You can romance upstairs there.

Then downstairs you are able to birds'-nest in a quiet English spirit, unmolested. For now there is only you in the Outer Hebrides, near the warm Gulf-stream, you and those soft, cold, wild sea-birds, with their peculiar calls; you, and the rocks, and the cliffs, and the waves, and the sea-birds. Think of the trip in the brown-sailed open fishing-boat to reach the Islands.

There is a moorhen's nest in the Museum, the very identical copy of the moorhen's nest on our island in the pond at home. The same nest of dried sedge and flags, and the same eggs which, if you boil them, are exactly like plovers' eggs when eaten. Plovers' eggs are eaten where money is not hard to get; they sometimes cost 10s. per dozen.

Best of all, however, is the dainty little moss-loving wren, with the prettiest little eggs. And her tail is the neatest thing in nature, surely made to suit the nest in which there seems so little room to sit and have sixteen eggs or more. The hedge-sparrow, however, has the prettiest eggs, sky-blue, with a shade of green like very good china. The blackbird is there, too, with a nest such as you know so well, built just anywhere, only not, of course, like that of the sparrow, who simply doesn't care. And the swallow, who takes pains with one home and then always uses the same every summer; the swallow, who comes regularly from so very far across the sea—the bird you see near the water, when you are fishing, picking off flies, or flying very low on a cricket ground when your side has lost the toss.

But I should weary you, dear reader, with a full description of all I saw. But I may mention in conclusion that you see not only animals, but people, at South Kensington. For instance, Ranjitsinhji was on the elephant. So also Darwin was there among the monkeys, though I must say I don't really believe in him; but there is a bust of him at home, and I know his face. General Baden-Powell is in the mosquito part, though I don't know why. But he would score off the mosquito somehow, by putting soap in its eye or somehow. Mornington Cannon is with the model-horses; he is my favourite horseman. It is only natural to see Sir John Lubbock, now Lord Avebury, with the insects and the bees. I can quite believe you can reason with bees, with a little patience.

It is difficult to describe all I saw and did that day, but perhaps what I have mentioned may give you some idea. I have never since done quite so much on any one day. It may appear to you to have nothing to do with Christmas. All I can say is, to me it has.

SOME CHRISTMAS LETTERS TO JOHN.

MY DEAR JOHN,—Considering you have spent every school holiday here for the last four years, in fact, ever since your mother and father went back to India, I was somewhat amused to get your letter asking whether you might come to us this Christmas. Amused at your being polite enough not to take a certainty for granted; an uncommon piece of good manners in a youth of to-day. Certainly you may come, my boy; and we shall all be very glad indeed to have you.

It is splendid news that you have gained your football colours, first of the new men. I was quite sure you would get into the

team all right. I knew you were a very promising and keen player, and as straight a goer as your father used to be—and still is, for the matter of that, though he plays polo now, and not football. Besides, your captain told me in confidence last month, when I was down, that you were "an absolute cert." Of course, I did not let you into that secret. You must now try to train on your house team for the cup-ties. You have no idea what an enterprising and inspiring leader can do for a house team. Now that you sport blue knickers and a cap of honour, I expect you to radiate; yes, to radiate into the several members of your house team the same keenness and "try" as gained you those outward and visible signs of football grace. Having gained your colours so young, you ought to be captain of the school team some day, John; and apart from your duty to your house, there is no education for a good school captain as valuable as the making of a good house team. Don't tell me you've not got the material. You must develop it, John. You've no idea how slackers and long-legged, over-grown wasters can be mesmerised into keenness and activity by an inspiring captain. Why, in my Oxford days we only had fourteen men all told in College who had ever played soccer—Wadham was a Rugby College—and only about half these were any good; but, by Jove, we taught four or five Rugger men to keep their hands off the ball and to use their feet, and we went right through to the final of the Inter-College cup, and only lost to a team full of Blues by an odd goal. But, John, we had a captain.

By the way, you do not mention about your form prize. Your being top in the half-term order raised my hopes high. For you are not the sort that does worse in exams. than in vivâ-voce form work; you've got the knack, I am happy to think, of rising to the occasion, and of putting what you do know into decent shape on paper. Can it be that all this football has taken your mind off Livy and Euripides? I do hope not. For of all things, John, I should like to find you one of the real right sort, able to concentrate on the matter in hand. Keep a level-headed perspective of things, and you may be top in work and top in games as well; at any rate, during your school days. Look at Alfred Lyttelton. But you must concentrate; have your mind in compartments, and shut down the football compartment when you are at books. There is nothing so valuable, John, as the habit of concentration. However, I daresay you'll get the prize all right.

Now, I want to tell you something. There is a motor-car here, in the coach-house. Johnson has had to put the wagonette and the tax-cart into the barn, and is very sick. He thinks it's bad luck "going back on them good 'osses." Now, John, I must beg of you that you in no way turn taps, pull handles, experiment or otherwise interfere with this car or its engine. I shall be most delighted for you to go thoroughly into the matter of the car—it's a 14 h.p. Daimler, and a fizzer—but only under the eye of myself or the *mécanicien*. He is not quite such an ass as most of them are; so I think I can trust you with him. But note this, John. Motor-car machinery, like all machinery, is most terribly logical. Proper effect follows proper cause, absolutely. If you go and upset the internal logic of a motor, the motor won't mote or motes "*à travers*." Therefore, you will be so very good as to make yourself complete master of the sequence of facts inside my car, and of precisely what each part does before you ask me to be allowed to learn to drive.

One reason why I am going to allow you to be introduced to the car is that I believe machinery is a splendid educator. A classical education—such, for instance, as you are engaged in absorbing—is liable to promote, so to speak, too great a belief in words. Words are very valuable in their own way, but they are not things. One great secret of success, John, is to see things as they are, both with the eye and with the mind's eye. Words often act like too much whiskey; they make you see things or think you see things which are not there at all, or else see nothing.

Now, I want you to see the inside of my motor as it is. Then, when you can satisfy me of the correctness of your vision, you shall learn to drive it.

I enclose a letter for you from your cousin. She wears long skirts now, and her hair in a lump behind her head. But otherwise she is unaltered. At least, I believe so. The vicar's son, the one who is now a second-lieutenant in the R.G.A., is home on leave. He plays Badminton here a good deal. I expect you'll find him a pleasant companion.

I will meet you at Westleigh with the motor-car, by the usual train. Till then, good-bye.

Your affectionate uncle,

C. Burgess.

P.S.—We will convey your prize books in the car. The luggage can come by the carrier.

(*From* MISS WINIFRED BURGESS *to* JOHN BURGESS.)

DEAR COUSIN JACK,—You won't have to misspell Frau Niermeyer's name or address any more. I came home for good last week. My education is finished. It is very nice to be done with that stiff Munich, though I must say the Germans do have lovely music. It's an awful pity you are such a dunce at music, though I will say you are not bad for going to concerts in London with, for a school boy. Did you ever get that pair of white gloves which made you so uncomfortable at Queen's Hall last winter? I told you you would lose them. I suppose you wear a tail coat now in the evening instead of an Eton jacket. How funny you must look! For goodness' sake, Jack, don't try to look older than you are; it simply spoils anyone, and only makes them look more infantile. I don't mind your growing bigger, which, I suppose, you can't help. But for goodness' sake keep young. It's awful when decent boys grow old before their time. They are not any fun when they fancy they have forgotten how to play. Young boys, like you were last holidays, and old men like Uncle Charles, are the best. They can play without being idiots or condescending. I hope you have not got condescending. I always know when I can bowl you out—at least, I used to; it was when you shipped that "you're only a girl" style. I did laugh last summer, seeing you ordered about by the cricket captain in the Speech Day match. Who would have thought you were meek like that? But I must say, you used to be decent to play with except when you got lordly and tried "placing to leg like Ranji." I know how to play bridge. Sarah Kensington taught us at Frau Niermeyer's. But it's not much of a game; you have to think so. I see some idiot has been writing to the papers about boys at school being allowed to play scientific card games. I hope it wasn't you.

We play Badminton in the barn still. There is a new big sky-light, and you can see ever so much better. But it's a nuisance having to move the carriages out. They are there now, because of the motor-car. You had better not touch the car. It goes like the wind, but the explosions it makes in the coach-house are awful. Uncle Charles gets up at six now instead of seven, and puts on dirty canvas clothes with coat and trousers in one, and comes in just before breakfast covered with oil and stuff. He says he is learning the job because it is more bother to look after "chauffeurs" than after cars. He is mad on motoring. If you're cute, you'll get lots of mounts this Christmas on his best horses.

I don't know whether we'll be able to have cricket in the barn these holidays. You must get leave to put up some wire-netting over the sky-light. Besides, I'm not sure I'm not too old for cricket now. Your aunt says I must not be "quite such a hoyden." I'm sure I don't know what she means, but it sounds horrid. Besides, I can't help having a good eye, can I? And cricket does not make one hot when one knows how to play. Uncle Charles says cricket is not a game of strength, and I'm sure the way he bats is not half as hot as tennis.

We went to such a stunning play when Uncle Charles met me in London, called *Little Mary*. It would do you good to see it, when I think of your performance last Christmas Day. Uncle Charles said thank Heaven the pursuit of athletics in his youth had made him hate any but very simple food, and just enough of it. It's about eating too much, the play. But you don't know that till the end. We had a good time in London. I am reading all J. M. Barrie's books. I am thinking of being an author.

Now I must stop. Mind you do not come back old and silly.

Your affectionate cousin,

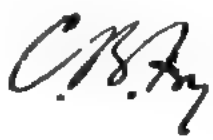
WINIFRED.

P.S.—I am very glad you have got your football cap. I will go with you to the matches at Southampton this Christmas again.

P.S.—I enclose an essay on "An Ideal Christmas." You need not show it to any one else. It's only a first attempt.

P.S.—Tom Hughes is at home at the Vicarage, having his holidays. He calls it "leave." He is rather nice when he forgets he's a lieutenant.

P.S.—The essay is written as though by a grown-up male, as you will see.



THE SEA-POACHER.

A Tale of the Iceland Fishing Grounds.

By A. E. JOHNSON. Illustrated by ALFRED PEARSE.

"IF I was you, skipper," said the mate, as he spun the wheel round, "I'd be a bit careful like. You mind what that boat said this morning. And besides, there bein' a risk of the bogey-man, if one of them head men ashore was to——"

Captain Nilsson faced round angrily. "Who asked you to speak?" he demanded. "I said, 'Take her in,' and take her in I will. I'd have you know I'm master here."

The mate said nothing, but wrath smouldered in his eye. On board a trawler the skipper is *primus inter pares* only, and even a deck-hand is like to resent high-handedness.

Presently the steward climbed to the wheel-house, and handed a steaming pot of tea to the mate. "Yourn's in the chart-room, skipper," he remarked to Nilsson. The latter swung heavily out of the wheel-house door, and, descending clumsily to the deck, disappeared into his sanctum.

As the mate buried his face in the huge mug, the steward threw a sweeping glance

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round, and cocked an eyebrow in surprise. "Goin' inside the limit?" he queried.

The mate set his pot down with a bang, and seemed about to reply at length. Then he paused, and slowly passed the back of his hand across his mouth. "Yes," he said.

The steward waited for further enlightenment, but none came. "Bit risky, ain't it?" he suggested, encouragingly.

"Skipper's drunk," said the mate laconically. "And if it wasn't for the consequences," he added, explosively, "I'd like to see him caught, the dirty swab. Seems to me he will be, too," he went on. "You mind what them Icelanders as boarded us this morning said. The bogey-man ain't so far away, that's certain; and if he was to come round the point there now he'd have us."

The "bogey-man," it should be explained, is the fisherman's term for the gun-boat which protects the Iceland fisheries, and endeavours to prevent foreign trawlers from towing within the three-mile limit.

"Besides," continued the mate, jerking his thumb shorewards, "there's houses. If one of them head-men was to take it into him to come out and get our number, who's to prevent his reportin' us? 'Tain't no sort of use coverin' up the ship's name and playin' them sort of games. I guess the old *Sea-Cat* ain't to be disguised as easy as all that." He nodded his head and pointed to the distant collection of buildings—for all the world like scattered bathing machines—on the shores of the bay, which marked the site of the Icelandic capital. "Within sight of Reykjavik, too. Why, they might put the bogey-man on to us theirselves. There ain't no telling. Oh, I reckon the old man's done it this time."

Presently the skipper climbed again to the wheel-house. His face was flushed and his eye was queer, but save for a gruff "Winch ready," as he took the wheel, he vouchsafed no word. The mate grunted a sulky "Aye, aye," and dropped to the deck to take his post at the steam winch. Several of the deck hands were already getting ready to shoot the trawl. They glanced curiously about them, and shot an occasional upward glance at the wheel-house: but they made no comment upon the skipper's doings.

A rough crowd was the crew of the *Sea-Cat*, —Nilsson's lambs, as they were called in port. The scum of Hull and Grimsby docks, drunken ashore, and never sober at sea so long as there was liquor to be got. Nilsson himself was a fitting leader of such a gang. Of Swedish extraction, but hailing from Grimsby, he was known generally as the hardest drinking member of a trade not over given to sobriety. His record ashore and at sea was no savoury one: but being withal, when sober, a good seaman and a more than ordinarily skilful fisherman, his owners tolerated him, and shut their eyes, as far as might be, to his failings. Added to his other attainments, he undoubtedly possessed in no small degree the power of command. It was generally acknowledged that Nilsson himself was the only man capable of handling Nilsson's lambs.

Two new men there were, however, in the ship's complement this trip: the mate and steward. Companions in misfortune, both had been compelled, after exhausting their stocker in a series of frolics at Hell's Kitchen and sundry other choice taverns of Grimsby, to join the *Sea-Cat* in default of a better berth. And both ere now had found occasion to regret it. "I'd give my share of the trip to be back in GY," more than once the mate had declared.

It was no unusual thing for the *Sea-Cat* to be fishing within the limits. Nilsson was by no means the sort of man to have scruples about law-breaking of that kind. To venture so close to the shore, however, not only after receiving direct warning that the gun-boat was in the immediate neighbourhood, but to do so in Faxe Bay, within sight of Reykjavik: this was what puzzled the mate. To court capture (and its attendant penalties) in so reckless a fashion disgusted him.

The *Sea-Cat's* luck, however, had been dead out for the past week. Tow as she might, but little fish came to her net, and it was imperative, unless the trip was to be prolonged far beyond the usual period, that a heavier catch should be made, and that speedily. Accordingly, Nilsson had determined to try closer in shore. It is possible that had the stock of whiskey in the chart-room cupboard been less, an enterprise so foolhardy—under the circumstances—might not have found favour in his eyes so readily. But that same morning he had bartered a load of small and useless fish for several bottles of spirits with the Icelanders who had given warning of the gun-boat's presence, and one bottle was already nearly empty.

The skipper laid a hand on the telegraph and shoved the pointer over. *Tr—r—ring*, came the answering signal as the engines were slowed down. Over the side went the great net, the heavy "doors" which were to keep its mouth distended falling with a splash from the derricks. Then, as the ship went

slowly ahead, the steel warps ran out swiftly from the drum of the winch. At length, when the sunken trawl had been left some four hundred yards or so astern, the winch was checked, the straining warps were pinned together aft, and the skipper, signalling half speed ahead, began to cruise slowly round and about.

Thus a couple of hours passed. Ever and again Nilsson raised the glasses to his eyes and swept the horizon with a searching glance. On deck, too, the men kept lifting an anxious eye for signs of the "bogey-man." No glimpse of the gun-boat, however, was to be had.

At length the skipper deemed it time to haul. "Winch ready," he shouted through the wheel-house window.

"Aye, aye, sir," came the response from below.

Nilsson rang off the engines. "Le' go behind," he shouted, as the pulsating throb ceased, and with a loud twang the loosened warps flew asunder. "Right away," roared the skipper, then.

"Away it is," cried the mate, and with a clatter and a clash the noisy winch began to slowly coil in the warps. Gradually the ship swung round till she lay broadside to the breeze, with the net—of which the position was plain from the direction of the warps—to windward. With a sudden commotion the doors, their steel-shod keels gleaming, appeared above the surface and the winch stopped. A few moments' pause, then up, with a bubbling swirl, popped the rounded end of the tight-packed bag. Down upon it swooped the screaming gulls, heedless of the knot of deck-hands who, hurrying to the side, caught hold of the wide mouth of the trawl, and with many a lusty tug pulled in the slack until the bag lay close alongside. A rope-end was speedily twisted round, and a turn or two of the winch brought the bag half out of the water. In a trice the mast tackle was hitched on, and as the clattering winch again went to work, the great load was dragged slowly up until it swung heavily in board and hung dripping over the fore deck. It was the biggest catch yet of the trip, and the skipper laughed grimly as he looked at it. He thrust his reddened face into the mate's as he passed him.

"That for your dirty gun-boat," quoth he, and snapped his fingers.

Even the mate was bound to admit the luck, and for the moment—since he was entitled to a share in the profits of the trip—forgot his fears.

Meanwhile the trawl had been emptied and again dropped overboard, and was once more being towed astern. Knee-deep in the slippery mass which struggled on the fore deck, the hands were brandishing gory knives, splitting open and beheading the cod, gutting the haddock, plaice, and halibut, and flinging aside the cod heads and the small and useless fish.

An hour passed. Then Nilsson, as his eye roved around, caught sight of something on the shore that arrested his glance. He looked again, snatched up his glasses, and gave a prolonged stare. What he saw was a boat putting off from the beach by the little collection of houses to which the mate had drawn attention. In the boat were three figures. Their errand he did not know, but he could guess. He closed the glasses with a click, and said nothing.

It was some time before the crew, busy with their various tasks, took notice of the approaching boat. Presently, however, the third hand, pausing in the midst of his cod-splitting to straighten his back, caught sight of her. In an undertone he communicated his discovery to his fellows. All glanced at the wheel-house. The skipper was staring straight ahead, to all appearances oblivious of the new factor in the situation. After a few mutterings one of the deck-hands was sent to acquaint him. The man climbed to the wheel-house and gave his news. Nilsson turned on him with sudden fury.

"D'ye think I'm blind, ye thick-headed lubber?" he asked.

Too much taken aback to retort, the man rejoined his companions, venting his resentment in a pithy summary of the skipper's moral character.

By and by the mate lurched aft to the galley for a pot of tea. He poured a pint of the steaming liquid down his throat, and spoke.

"What'd I tell you?" he asked. The steward looked up interrogatively. The mate, with one comprehensive gesture, jerked the dregs from his pot overboard, and indicated the approaching boat.

"Yon's one of them head-men chaps, you can bet your clumpers," he said.

The steward shaded his eyes and stared eagerly across the water. "How's the old man?" he asked at length.

The other winked significantly. "See that nip he went and took after we hauled in that big bag? Reckon there'll be trouble if them Icelanders try to come aboard."

"What'll he do, d'y' think?"

"Dunno," said the mate, as he moved away. "Anything his drunken head tells him to, I s'pose."

Meanwhile the strange boat was rapidly drawing nearer, scudding along under all the canvas she could carry. As she approached, the crew paused in their work and gazed curiously at her. Nobody spoke; all waited to see what course the skipper would pursue.

Soon the little craft was almost within hailing distance. Her sails dropped, and two of her crew got out their oars—long, almost bladeless, sweeps that seemed at a distance like mere poles. The third man, seated in the stern, was steering. Evidently they intended to come alongside. As the boat—a somewhat curiously-shaped, open craft, pointed at both stem and stern—drew nearer, it became possible to distinguish the persons and features of the crew. The two rowers were young men, fair-haired, blue-eyed, with high cheek-bones: typical Norsemen, in brief. They were clad from head to foot in complete suits of yellow horse-skin, and their hands, even as they rowed, were swathed in thick woollen mittens. The steersman was an older man, bearded, and with a certain air of authority in his bearing. He, as the boat came within hailing distance, rose in the stern and shouted something to those on the trawler. The distance, however, was too great for his words to be intelligible.

"PUSH OFF," HE SHOUTED.

In response Nilsson leaned out of the wheelhouse window. His crew, familiar with his powers of oratory—which were extensive and peculiar—waited expectantly. They were disappointed. The skipper, though his looks were black, restrained himself. "Push off," he shouted, and waved his hand as if to motion the intruding boat away. The other again shouted something, and then addressed some words to his two companions. Apparently he was urging them to greater activity, for they bent to their oars with a will, and, coming nearer, made as if to run alongside.

Nilsson watched them with the veins swelling on his forehead. Presently the bearded Icelander, now within easy hailing distance, spoke again. But before he had uttered two words the sluices of the skipper's wrath were opened, and from his mouth there poured a torrent of threats and abuse. Even the crew, accustomed to Nilsson's mastery of invective, were impressed. Nine-tenths of the idiom was doubtless lost upon the Icelander, possessed only of a limited knowledge of the

language, but the meaning was clear enough. Leaning far out of the window, the skipper shook his clenched fist at the object of his wrath, and dared him, with the foulest oaths, so much as to touch his ship.

The speech, however, had no effect; the Icelanders drawing closer, and displaying an evident intention to come aboard.

Then Nilsson's temper burst out of all bounds. Shouting to the third hand to take his place at the wheel, he flung open the wheel-house door, and leapt at a bound from the engine casing to the deck. Snatching up the hose that had been used for washing the gutted fish, he ran to the side.

"Now," he cried, brandishing the pipe in the air, "come alongside if you dare."

The Icelanders said nothing, but persisted. Only a few yards separated them from the ship's side.

"Right!" yelled the infuriated skipper, "if you want it you shall have it."

He was close to the door of the engine room, and turning, shouted to the chief to set the donkey going. In a few moments the throb of the donkey-engine was heard, and almost immediately a stream of water burst from the hose pipe which lay at the skipper's feet. Instantly Nilsson snatched it up and turned the jet full upon the upstanding figure of the steersman in the Icelanders' boat. The sudden impact of the water, taking him unawares, upset the old man's balance. He tottered, lost his equilibrium, and almost fell overboard. But he managed to clutch the gunwale in time, and tumbled heels over head into the bottom of the boat. A roar of laughter went up from the crew on the trawler, renewed when the skipper, turning the hose upon the remaining two occupants of the boat, succeeded in knocking one off his thwart. The other, endeavouring to escape the stream of water, let go his oar, which slipped overboard and went bobbing over the waves.

Thus temporarily unmanned, the Icelanders' boat speedily drifted away from the trawler, and out of range of the hose. The steersman, however, had quickly picked himself up, and was shouting to the others. His composure was gone, and it was evident that his temper, too, was roused. The lost oar was at once replaced by another, the boat was righted, and, to the astonishment of those on the trawler, the strangers again made as if to come alongside.

Nilsson seemed as a fiend incarnate. He glared round for a missile, but could find nothing to lay his hands on. He seized the hose pipe again, but this time the Icelanders, prepared for the onslaught, withstood the stream of water undismayed. At first their intention was not clear. Then as they shipped their oars and allowed their boat to drop back, it became apparent that they proposed to hitch their painter to the warps of the trawl which hung (for the net was still being towed) tense and taut under the strain of the heavy load of the submerged bag, over the steamer's stern. One of the younger men, scrambling into the nose of the boat, made a hitch with the rope round the nearer warp. Then, of a sudden, Nilsson, who had been standing stock still, watching this last manœuvre with glowering eyes, ran to the winch. With a furious yell he plucked out the pin, and unlocked the machinery. Like a flash the straining warps flew whizzing out, and at the same instant the Icelanders' boat was dragged under in a gurgling swirl of water. The crew looked on horror-struck. It was murder, rank and open. But all had happened so suddenly, so unexpectedly, that interference, even had any been so minded, would have been impossible. Dragged under with their boat were the two young Icelanders. Their bodies, doubtless inextricably entangled, never rose to the surface. The elder man, as the nose of the boat was jerked suddenly downwards, was shot from his seat in the stern high into the air, and fell upon the water some little distance from where his boat had disappeared. Garbed as he was, with his legs thrust into heavy sea-boots, his chances of being able to swim were nought. But his oilskins, inflated with air, at first kept him buoyed upon the surface. From this perilous position his frantic cries for help rent the air. Nilsson, insane with drink and passion, merely laughed and shook his fist. The crew seemed terror-stricken and powerless to move. Two men alone ran to the rescue. They were the mate and the steward. The former, knife in hand, sprang upon the engine casing, and fell to hacking at the lashings of a life-buoy. The steward hit upon a quicker expedient. Running aft, he seized a coil of rope. Round his head he swung it, lasso fashion, and launched it forth. Its snaky length untwisted in the air, but the wind caught it and blew it wide of its mark. The wretched Icelander, from whose clothes the sustaining air was rapidly oozing, uttered a despairing shriek which must have pierced to the very marrows of the listeners. But rescue was at hand. Grasping the freed life-buoy in his right hand, and steadying himself

with the other on the hand-rail, the mate stood erect upon the engine casing. Thrice he slowly swung the buoy to and fro, then hurled it with all his might. The mark, at that distance, was no easy one to hit. But Providence guided his arm, and the buoy lit upon the water but a few yards short. The struggling, sinking figure made frantic efforts to reach it, and a foam-capped wave tossed it into his arms.

Already the steward was busy with the tackle by which the ship's boat was slung abaft the engine casing. But as the mate dropped to the deck to help, Nilsson intercepted him.

"Who's giving orders for the boat to be lowered?" he demanded, with furious wrath.

The mate faced him steadily and looked him squarely in the eye.

"*I* am," he said, quietly.

With a roar, Nilsson swung up his fist, doubled like a sledge-hammer. Ere he could plant a blow, however, the mate's lean fingers had caught his wrist, and held it as in an iron vice.

THE MATE'S LEAN FINGERS CAUGHT HIS WRIST AND HELD IT AS IN AN IRON VICE.

The crew stood by, expectant. Their sympathies were all with the skipper. But there was this virtue, at least, common to them all, that they would as soon have thrown a case of whiskey overboard, as have interfered with fair play in a fight.

For a few moments the two men faced each other silently. The skipper's wrist was still held in the mate's fierce grip, but his other hand was free. Ruffian though he might be, Nilsson was no coward, and for his opponent, though a big and lusty man, he had no sort of fear. But there was that in the mate's eye which kept the skipper's hand limply at his side. He quailed before the Right, by which, should he have it, the strong man is made invincible. When at length he spoke, his tone was more subdued, though truculent still.

"Who's goin' to man her?" he asked.

"*I* am," again said the mate. He relaxed his grip upon the other's wrist, and turned to help the steward. Instinct told him he was master of the situation. Nilsson laughed sardonically, but folded his arms and made no further effort to interrupt.

In a short space of time the mate and the steward, by herculean labours—for not one of the crew volunteered a helping hand—had succeeded in lowering the boat. Dropping into her over the side, they pushed off, and getting out the oars, made the best of their way towards the helpless figure floating on the top of the waves.

They had not gone far before the rattle of the winch on the trawler was borne on the wind to their ears, while the steam escaping from the exhaust pipe showed clearly enough that the net was being hauled in.

Neither spoke, but the same idea occurred to both, that it was Nilsson's intention to stow his gear, make off, and leave them behind. And sure enough, as soon as the bag had swung in board, the *Sea-Cat's* nose veered round, and away she went, full speed, southwards. By this time the rescuers had reached the object of their errand. They found him clinging desperately to the buoy, half dead from the long immersion in icy water. So completely helpless was he that only with the greatest difficulty were they able to haul him, but half conscious, into the boat. His fingers still tenaciously grasped the lifebuoy, which was dragged in with him. Fortunately, in an inner pocket of the poor fellow's horseskin jacket they found a spirit flask of which the cork had withstood the salt water, and a dram poured down his throat did much to revive him. Then they took to their oars again, and shaped a course for the shore. The departure of the trawler troubled them but little. At the worst, a long pull of an hour or so would bring them to the shore at some point within reach of the Icelander's home. Rather were they puzzled at Nilsson's action, since it wreaked but a poor vengeance on them, while depriving him of the ship's sole boat, and of the services of two valuable hands.

As they pulled the boat round, however, they discovered a new factor in the situation. Looming up across the water was a ship, of which the lines were unmistakeable. It was the "bogey-man," fast bearing down upon them, and in pursuit, as they could guess, of the *Sea-Cat*. The hurried departure of Nilsson was thus explained, and the castaways at once determined on an alteration in their plans. They lay right in the path of the gun-boat, so long as she held her present course, and it would be easy to hail her as she passed, and get picked up. Medical assistance for the rescued Icelander would be forthcoming, and they themselves would be able to lay a statement of all that had happened before the ship's commander. So they rested on their oars, and watched the coming of the "bogey-man."

"Reckon the old man might as well save his coal," remarked the steward, jerking his thumb in the direction of the trawler, now a diminishing speck in the distance.

"Aye," rejoined the mate. "The bogey-man'd give the old *Sea-Cat* a day's start to Faroe, and catch her."

"What's the game, d'y' think?"

"Dunno," was the answer. "Maybe skipper's drunk enough to think the bogey-man'd not have seen him inside the limit."

"'Tain't likely," agreed the steward. "And the old man can't make out as how he was just a cruisin' there, like. Guess the Danish-man must ha' seen him haulin'; there ain't no hidin' the steam from the exhaust pipe."

They watched the gun-boat forging steadily ahead, and rushing down upon them like some leviathan monster. There was no chance of their not being seen; the only fear was lest, being mistaken for fishermen of the coast, they should be passed by. The dissimilarity, however, of their boat from the distinctively shaped native craft made such a misfortune unlikely. As the gun-boat came within hail, the mate stood up and shouted with the full strength of his lungs. The steward jumped up and supplemented his efforts. At first it seemed as though they would attract no notice. They redoubled their cries, and endeavoured by frantic gesticulations—pointing in the direction of the vanishing trawler, and then to the bottom of the boat where lay the rescued Icelander—to show that they had news of importance to communicate. To their relief the "bogey-man" slowed down to half speed, and as they took the hint, and, plying their oars with vigour, made towards her, she stopped her engines, hove to, and waited for them. Quickly getting alongside, the trio were taken aboard, and the "bogey-man"—a Danish cruiser—resumed her pursuit of the *Sea-Cat*.

The miserable Icelander was taken below, and handed over to the care of the surgeon. The latter pronounced him to be suffering from severe shock and chill, but prophesied his speedy recovery. The mate and the steward were taken before the officer in command of the cruiser. To him they told the tale of what had happened on board the *Sea-Cat*, including the murder of the two young Icelanders, and the narrow escape of their companion from a similar fate. They learned, in return, that the gun-boat, rounding the distant point, had espied the *Sea-Cat* hauling in her trawl within the limits, that the latter had promptly made off, that the gun-boat had as promptly given chase, and expected to overhaul her within a very short space of time. The news of Nilsson's more serious delinquencies naturally increased the determination of the commander of the "bogey-man" to bring the offender to book.

Meanwhile, on board the *Sea-Cat* there was tumult and dismay. So soon as the mate and steward had put off to the assistance

of the drowning Icelander, Nilsson had given the word to the haul. His intention had been, merely out of spite, to steam away and leave the boat and its occupants in the lurch—as indeed they themselves had suspected. The sudden apparition of the "bogey-man," however, had altered the complexion of affairs. Partly out of drunken bravado, partly as a last desperate resort, Nilsson determined to defy the gun-boat.

THEY SAW NILSSON SWAY, TOTTER, AND FALL.

Quickly stowing his gear, he signalled full speed ahead, and fled southwards. But his case, seemingly at all events, was hopeless. It stands to reason that a trawler steaming twelve knots an hour at full speed, can hardly hope to escape a cruiser doing eighteen with ease. It was not the first time, however, that the *Sea-Cat* had run from the "bogey-man." Once before she had taken to her heels, and with success. But on that occasion a whole fleet of delinquent trawlers had been trapped within a snug little bay at Grindavik. Nilsson had been the first to scent danger, and the *Sea-Cat*, besides being first away, was the fastest trawler out of Grimsby.

In the present instance, everything was against Nilsson, and he knew it. In the ordinary course he would have surrendered, and made the best of a bad job, but the thought of his recent misdeeds acted as a powerful incentive to flight, and he hoped blindly for some lucky chance that might make escape possible. His mood was shared by his crew. Panic ruled the ship.

But the gods fought not on the side of the *Sea-Cat*. Minute by minute the gun-boat crept nearer, and nearer still; ruthless, relentless, not to be shaken off, not be baulked of her just prey. The crew of the trawler clustered aft, and gazed wide-eyed at their pursuer. Suddenly there was a puff of smoke from the latter's decks, and as a dull *boom*

fell upon the ear, a shot plunged heavily and sullenly into the sea a hundred yards or so wide of the trawler. The crew turned white and frightened faces towards the wheel-house, where Nilsson held the wheel. It was the warning shot, and they knew too well what must follow disregard of its summons.

Nilsson leaned forward and grasped the handle of the telegraph. The crew heard the bell tinkle, and thought he had rung off the engines. But the pointer in the engine room merely travelled half round the dial and returned to "full speed ahead." It was as though the skipper were urging the engines to redouble their efforts.

Breathless, the crew awaited the gun-boat's second word, their starting eyes staring fixedly across the water. Again the puff of smoke, the report; and this time a great column of water rose dead astern, so close as to drench the decks with spray.

They had the range, clear enough, those gunners. At the next shot, they——

A volley of oaths from overhead caused the panic-stricken crew to look up. It was Nilsson, who had left the ship to steer herself, and was standing on the engine casing abaft the funnel—Nilsson, white-faced and trembling. But it was rage, not terror, that blanched his cheeks, and fury, not fear, that shook his frame.

Then a terrible thing occurred. With their looks turned on Nilsson, the crew saw not the puff of smoke that for the third time spurted from the gun-boat. Nor did their ears catch the thud of the report which followed it. But, of a sudden, there was a hideous bang, and as the funnel of the vessel went crashing overboard, they saw Nilsson sway, totter, and fall after it. Next moment, the *Sea-Cat* was floating idle, a totally disabled wreck.

The rest of the story is soon told. The *Sea-Cat* was speedily taken charge of by her captor, and towed back to Reykjavik. There her crew were placed on trial for the murder of the two Icelanders. The evidence of the mate and the steward (who were not, of course, included among the prisoners) showed, however, that Nilsson alone had been responsible for the acts which led up to and caused the death of the victims, and their testimony was corroborated by that of the rescued Icelander. The prisoners were acquitted and found their way back, singly and in pairs, on various trawlers, to England, and the purlieus of the docks. Nilsson's body had shared the fate of his victims.

"Some says 'twas a judgment, sir," said the mate, who told me this tale as we kept a watch together one night in Faxe Bay. "*God's debts are never paid in money.*"

A MEET OF H.M.S. "BRITANNIA" BEAGLES.
Photo copyright Press Picture Agency.

SCHOOL MAGAZINES

"Haec olim meminisse juvabit."

ALPERTON HALL MAGAZINE (near Harrow, August).—A Harrow boy remarks in this magazine that he has reached his last term at the school on the hill, and is moving on to Aachen in Germany to study motor mechanics for two years. He says he is not sorry to leave Harrow, as he found the existence rather monotonous. Though for the comfort of Harrow he adds: "You do not leave the place without the feeling that, after all, the time you spent there you enjoyed sometimes." The A.H.M. is a smart little publication.

The Askean (July).—Bright and interesting, the articles being written in a lively vein only too rare in school magazines. H. Geo. Hart knows how to use his pen, and we have laughed over his "Links with the Past."

The Avonian (Port Talbot).—Though this magazine is an infant, it is a lusty child. The matter is attractively displayed. "School Jottings," excellent, to wit. A girl of Form V., writing on "A Day at the Seaside," remarks: "Then we went for donkey rides on the beach. One of the girls was thrown off, but fortunately alighted safely on terra cotta." "School Advertisements" are not without humour. Thus—"FLOUR—Buy Early Bird's Self-Raising Flour. For use at supper—gets you out of bed in the morning without any trouble. No more alarum clocks needed. Thousands of testimonials." Portraits of football and hockey teams good.

Bancroftian (Woodford, July).—The matriculation candidates have obtained magnificent results, signalising the fact of this year being the last in which matriculation candidates are placed in Honours by taking four out of six. H. H. makes a capital suggestion that every boy who scores 100 "not out" in any big school match should be presented with an inscribed bat. He cynically adds: "Centuries are not common enough for it to become a dangerous item of expense to school funds."

The Collegian (organ of the Baptist Students' Fraternal Union).—This magazine is off the track we usually traverse in the course of reviewing. It is painfully serious, as its *raison d'être* might imply. Yet we see no reason why *The Collegian* should not introduce a spice of humour into its pages; or, failing that, it might devote some space to sport and athletics. To be "lean and pale and leaden-eyed," with much mortification of the spirit, can no more help the Baptist student than any other student. In the College Chat the references to cricket, tennis, and football are of a Laodicean order. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that no victory on the field of battle is chronicled. We learn that Regent's Park College very nearly won the Shield Competition at cricket, and were beaten by three wickets. Regent's Park is losing A. M. Roberts, a "Jessopian" bat (it is not our adjective), and a man who will "long be remembered by opposing goal keepers." Rawdon College played a couple of matches with the Friends, losing one and drawing one. In the Tennis Tournament with the United Colleges they suffered a slight reverse. Midland College chronicles a little debating, and Bangor students were on the eve of a Hebrew examination. There is an editorial lament about the lack of support, and there is a suggestion of a new policy and a new name. Motto, "Workers together with God."

Grammar School Magazine (Aberdeen).—The notes on physical registration are very interesting. Of 420 boys examined the general result is that the boy of good sight, good breathing room and power, and good head capacity, with signs of good nutrition, as shown by height, weight, and girth of limb, is usually high in his class or high in the school for his age. The principal exceptions are boys with excess of animal vitality, tempted to make work of play, and play of work; and the flabby, indolent boy, whose body and brains alike tend to fatty degeneration and cigarettes (at six a penny).

The Holmwood (Bexhill, August).—War has been waged in the editorial camp, and all because a printer's error clothed the magazine in red. "Green, the magazine had been great. Red, it would be ruined." Verily, how small a matter a great fire kindleth. "Blob Ballads" are good parodies.

The Johnian (July).—A contributor, too modest to own even a *nom de plume*, amusingly satirises "Lovely woman." Richard II. also falls under his lash. The boys went to His Majesty's Theatre, and, in spite of being disturbed by a slight suggestion of scene-shifting, slept well for 3 hours 55½min.

The Lyonian (the magazine of the Lower School of Harrow; editor, F. Swainson; sub-editors, S. Duncan and A. Anderson).—The annual sports appear to have been a huge success, especially from the point of view of attendance. So much was this the case that the crowd seems to have welled over on to the track and "the disgusted officials had a very trying time of it trying to remove those obstinate and weak-minded creatures who would persist in standing in the course. Creatures of this obtrusive and obstructive nature always make a point of getting all they can for nothing and think they are doing us a kindness by coming at all." Really, really, Mr. Editor, this is very strong language to apply to your patrons, many of whom, doubtless, were of the gentler sex. Perhaps your feathers were ruffled, but was it nice to put it in cold type? Do try in future to curb the young lions of the *Lyonian*. We are almost reminded of the young

lions of the *Daily Telegraph* in the days of Matthew Arnold.

Marlborough.—We are enabled to reproduce a photograph of Mr. Frank Fletcher, the successor of the Rev. Canon G. C. Bell, as head of Marlborough College. In referring to his successor on Speech Day at the close of last term, Canon Bell paid a very high tribute to Mr. Fletcher's fitness for the headship of one of the great schools of England. Mr. Fletcher leaves Rugby with many regrets, and full of honour for the excellent work he has accomplished there. He is not only a great scholar and disciplinarian, but has achieved some success in the world of sport. He is a keen mountaineer and a member of the Alpine Club. His favourite pastime is hockey, for which he got his "blue" playing for Oxford against Cambridge in 1893.

MR. FRANK FLETCHER.
The New "Head" of Marlborough.

The Owlet (Eastbourne).—This is as good as usual. One original article, however, is a rather meagre allowance, though, doubtless, the editor felt that motor-cars were the only subject of interest

The Penvro (Pembroke Dock, July).—Glad to see a new cover. What's in a name? We hope added prosperity for the magazine. W. B. S. contributes a neat little poem, entitled, "June, 1903." We select two verses :—

"Yes, indeed, the times have altered,
Gone are heat-waves, droughts and dust,
Nothing but a weary down-pour
Till we mutter in disgust,
'This is June.'

"What a tale the papers tell us:
Cricket played upon the mud,
Snow-storms, hail-storms, record rain-falls,
Rivers everywhere in flood,
And this in June!"

Stanley House School (July).—The editorial entitled, "The Boon of Nature," calls for special praise. In a "causerie" we are surprised to learn that while the genesis of plum-pudding in England is doubtful, mince-pie—the national dish of the English (!)—is founded upon haggis. A. A. G.'s article called "The Homing Instinct," is well thought out. A highly commendable feature, and one for all mags. to follow, is the illustration page included in Edward MacFarlane's "Butterflies and Moths." The illustrated school magazine would, we believe, prove hugely successful.

South African College (August).—An excellent magazine. The young South Africans bristle with energy. Their recreations are more laborious than most boys' work. Witness the following scheme of visits drafted by the school science club as winter relaxation :

The Salt River Railway Works.
The Cape Town Railway Engineering Works.
The Royal Observatory
The Simonstown Dockyard.
Pegram and Morden's Aerated Water Factory.
The Stellenbosch Jam Factory.
J. J. Hill's Confectionery Works.
The Cape Town Gas Works.
Richards' Printing Works.
The Clerks' Blanket Factory, &c., &c.

Twyvern (Taunton, July).—Very full and interesting. In respect to the amount of matter it contains, the good printing and editing and sub-editing, an example to editors in school magazines. The article by Erraticus on chess calls for special notice.

Wesley College Chronicle (Melbourne, June).—Glad to note that the football XV. is flourishing and playing up to the old colours of purple and gold. The section headed "The Old Brigade" is, in our opinion, the best form for embodying information about old boys we have yet met with. First each boy's name appears in small capitals, and then follows a paragraph about each The whole is concluded by notices of births, marriages, and deaths.

We have also to acknowledge receipt of *Carthusian*, *Cottesmorian* (3), *Haileyburian*, *Hurst Johnian*, *Lorettonian*, *Ousel* (2), *Sotoniensis*, *Student*, *Truro College Magazine*.

A STOLEN "HALF."

By STUART WISHING. Illustrated by GORDON BROWNE, R.I.

STRETTON'S a jolly good sportsman—and so is Maisie, too, if you can call a girl a sportsman. At any rate, she's a good sort, and when I leave school I shall ask her to marry me, unless some other fellow has got there first. But I daresay you'd like to know what she did, and why we are all so keen on her just at present. Very well; just listen for a few minutes, and you shall have the whole yarn, exactly as it all happened. I'd better begin at the beginning, or else I shall get fearfully tangled before I'm half through. However, you mustn't expect a grand tale, as my grammar's always a bit shaky, and there are a few words that I'm not sure of as regards the spelling. But if you don't mind a plain straightforward story (and I suppose the printer fellow will put the stops in the right place), I'm your man.

The whole thing happened last Tuesday; so you see I've got all the details fixed well in my mind. Besides, I was so excited over the business that I shall remember it if I live to be a hundred. (I believe you always say that sort of thing when you're telling a tale, but that's how I do feel about it—really.) I shall never forget what a stew I was in when Maisie—but there, that comes in the middle, so I'd better start over again.

Well, last Tuesday morning Dickie Vaughan—he's my chum—and I went in to school at nine o'clock as usual. There's nothing out of the common in that, but I mention the time to show that I remember every point. Dickie had been late for breakfast, and so had I. As a matter of fact, he thought I'd hidden his collar-stud, and wasted a lot of time arguing it out. I'd only borrowed it, as I'd lost my own, and how he found out that I'd got it, I don't pretend to know. He got the beastly thing back after about ten minutes discussion, and I had to go down with my collar tied on to my shirt by a piece of string. I told Dickie he was a selfish mule, but he didn't seem to mind that, so long as he got his stud back. Some chaps have no sense of shame at all.

However, we went down to breakfast, and managed to sneak in unobserved by the monitor. It wasn't till we'd nearly finished breakfast that a remark of Dickie's quite upset me. He asked me if I knew my rep.

"By Jove, no!" I answered. "I'd forgotten all about it."

"Same here," said Dickie. I felt rather glad that I wasn't the only one, but I didn't say so. He's so horrid sensitive.

"I meant to get up early and learn mine before breakfast," I said. "Only your fighting over that stud of yours made me late."

"You only wasted ten minutes over that. You were asleep long after the second bell had gone. There wasn't much notion of getting up early in *your* head."

"I could have learned it in ten minutes," I said, "I always can learn rep. quickly before breakfast."

"Yes, and forget it quickly afterwards," grinned Dickie. "I know you by this time. Anyhow, you've got ten minutes before school. Why not learn it now?"

"I can't learn things when I know I'm pressed for time," I answered. "We'll just have to trust to our luck in not being put on to-day."

"M'yes," he grunted. "That's a pretty feeble sort of thing to trust to. Still, I suppose there's no help for it."

We finished breakfast rather gloomily, and tried to learn a few lines before we went in. But it was no good—the wretched stuff wouldn't stay in my head, and Dickie was just as bad. We went into Big School for prayers, and came out as gloomy as ever. Stretton (that's the third form master) waved us cheerily into his form-room. He has a very cheery manner, and is on the whole a very decent chap. He does pile it on to a fellow who shirks, all the same.

Stretton followed us into the room after a few minutes, and sat down at his desk. He then proceeded to hear the rep. You can guess what happened. Dickie was put on and stumbled through two lines, and then came to a dead stop. It was no good my trying to prompt him—I didn't know it myself, and besides, Stretton has eyes like a hawk. Dickie was turned. I went on very soon after, and tried to mumble a few lines at the beginning. It was no good: he spotted me at once, and carefully put me on at the end part. I wish he wasn't so

beastly conscientious. Needless to say, I failed.

"Vaughan and Calmour, your names must go down on the list; this is the third time running that you have failed in your repetition." (His memory's marvellous.) "I am sorry, but you have brought it on yourselves."

All right, we knew that already; he needn't rub it in. I don't mind telling you that I had a pretty low opinion of Stretton just then. However, "we have changed all that," as somebody says. (We had that phrase in our French lesson yesterday, so I know it's all right.) There's one thing about Stretton; when a fellow's been turned in a lesson, he doesn't try to turn him in others—like some brutes I know. And to tell you the truth, Dickie and I didn't know much about our other work that morning, so we got off pretty cheaply by failing only once.

That one failure was unfortunate, and I will explain the reason. When a form goes through an afternoon and the next morning without a fellow being put down in the detention list, it gets a half-holiday next day. These halves don't occur very often, but as ill-luck would have it, Dickie and I were the only persons in the third who were turned that day. Of course, we couldn't help it, but the other chaps seemed to think that we'd done it on purpose, and were quite nasty about it. Just as if *we* wanted to lose a half any more than they did. Really, some chaps have no sense at all.

Dickie and I, by uniting our forces, were able to keep quiet any who seemed likely to be more troublesome than the rest; but I can tell you we felt pretty sick at missing a half just by failing in a few lines of rep. It certainly was rather hard luck when you come to think of it. Still, it was no use moping, and I said as much to Dickie.

HE WAS A VERY DECENT SORT, AND WE BOTH HOPPED IN.

"Moping! I'm not moping," he said. He always contradicts you if he possibly can. "I'm only trying to think of a way out of the difficulty."

"What difficulty!" I asked.

"To-morrow's half, you ass. I wish we could bring it off somehow."

"It's too late to think about that. The Head won't dream of giving us one now."

"He doesn't know yet," said Dickie, hopefully.

"Of course he does," I answered. "The morning list is always taken round at 12.0, after school. It's now a quarter past one, and he must have read it."

"I'll bet you an ice he hasn't," said Dickie.

"Well, we can't prove it either way, so it's no use betting."

"I tell you I know he hasn't read it, yet."

"How do you know?" I asked.

"Won't you back your opinion with an ice?"

"Not when you're so jolly sure," I said. "I've been had by you before, my son."

Dickie grunted, and I could see he was rather sick that I hadn't taken him on. I was too old a bird, though—besides, I'd known him for three years.

"Let's hear your knowledge," I said.

He grunted a bit more, but at last explained.

"Well," he remarked, "I saw the Head go off to the station in a topper and frock-coat. That means he's off to town. See?"

I saw, and was glad I hadn't staked my ice.

"If he's gone to town," pursued Dickie, "he won't be back before 9.0 to-night. It's now 12.30, so we've got about eight hours in which to operate."

"Less school-time," I interposed.

"Less what?"

"It's a business term," I explained. "It means you have to subtract our working hours, in which we can't do anything."

"Well, don't talk like a beastly shopman," said Dickie. (He's rather surly at times.) "Let's see what we can do."

"Go ahead," I remarked. "Tell me your plan."

"Why shouldn't we remove that detention list from the Head's study?"

I gasped and stared at Dickie, thinking him mad.

"It oughtn't to be hard," he went on. "You know Trotter"—that's our porter—"always lays the list on his writing-table at 12.0 The Head went off about ten; he doesn't know anything about the list, and we'll get our half after all."

"That sounds all right," I said. "But you've overlooked one or two things. Supposing Stretton tells him we were kept in?"

"Oh, he won't do that. Besides, we must take some risks—it wouldn't be sporting if it was easy."

That was all very well, but I wasn't so beastly keen on sportsmanship just then.

"Well, how are we going to get into his study?" I asked. "That won't be all jam."

"We'll find some way or other." Dickie was always a man of wiles—like that old chap Ulysses, πολύ — something or other. "We must manage to sneak in unobserved."

Well, to make a long story short—and it's an awful nuisance writing a tale—we discussed matters for about an hour, but couldn't think of any dodge. We simply toiled to find out how we could get into the Head's study without being seen; but, by the time the bell rang for afternoon school, we hadn't even thought of a dodge to get into the house—let alone the study. As luck would have it, we did get in after all, and, of course, Dickie claimed the credit. It was really a bit of pure luck, and Dickie had nothing to do with it.

When school was over we hung about outside the yard at the back of the Head's house, wondering how on earth we could get in. Neither Dickie nor I had any idea—in spite of what Dickie will tell you—when we saw a cart coming down the road, with a large canvas-covered bath inside. I spotted it at once, for I knew that they had taken away the old bath—which leaked—the day before. This gave me an idea.

"Let's get inside," I said.

Dickie saw what I wanted, and in less than five minutes we had explained to the man all about it. He was a very decent sort, and we both hopped in. Then he tied all the canvas on again in a brace of shakes. It was lucky for us that they were so careful of the paint, or we could never have hidden in it.

I can tell you it was hot work for two chaps to scrum up into one bath, and when you remember the canvas, you can imagine that the thermometer wasn't at freezing point inside our new tabernacle. It felt awfully funny being driven along in the dark. Presently we felt the cart stop, and we heard the driver explaining. In a few moments the bath was lifted down, and Dickie and I nearly killed ourselves by laughing silently at the comments on the weight. Next thing I knew was that I had slid down on to Dickie. He didn't like it, but he couldn't protest. Of course, they were carrying us upstairs. Then we were put down with a crash (they were beastly careless), and my head got a nasty jar. However, I bore it like one of the old Spartans, who seem to have spent

their spare time in carrying foxes about, which gnawed their vitals. (I never could understand why they did it, but it seems to have been quite common in those days.)

As soon as we heard the footsteps go out of the room, we cut the string with our knives and hopped out.

his study and the all-important list. Well, I won't bore you with tales of our hair-breadth escapes from being seen by two housemaids and a footman, but I will simply say that after incredible difficulties we got to the study all right.

Now comes what is usually called the crisis,

"WHAT ARE YOU BOYS DOING HERE?"

"Come on," said Dickie. "We'll have to look sharp."

I knew that already. I tell you, it was a risky business. There we were in the Head's house, not knowing who might be at home, and we had to ferret our way about to find

or the dénouement. (I looked that word out, so I know it's the word to use.) Just as we were hunting for the list—in fact, just as we'd found it—we heard a slight noise behind us, and, turning, we saw Maisie standing in the doorway! Maisie is the

Head's daughter—about nineteen, I should say, and jolly pretty. However, I didn't think much about her prettiness just then—I was in too much of a funk. I tell you, I nearly dropped, and Dickie was just as bad. Maisie was the first to break the awkward silence.

"What are you boys doing here?" she asked.

We were so upset that we couldn't answer, and she had to repeat the question.

"We came to bag a list," Dickie said, bluntly.

"Better sit down, and tell me the whole story," said Maisie.

"Well, you see," I hinted, "we aren't so very keen to hang about here in case——"

"Oh, that's all right," she answered, in an awfully jolly way, "mother's not here to-day, and father's in town, so I'm in charge."

Very well; we didn't mind entertaining her, so long as there was no chance of the Head dropping in. So we sat down, and explained the unfortunate business. I thought Maisie would have died of laughing when I told her about the bath. She stopped laughing all at once, and said, "I suppose you want the list rather badly?"

"Rather," said Dickie—who has no manners, and I said, "If you please."

"Well," she went on, "it's very wrong of me, but it would be a pity if you were to go back empty-handed after all your trouble. I shan't tell."

That was enough for us. We nipped on to that beastly list like lightning.

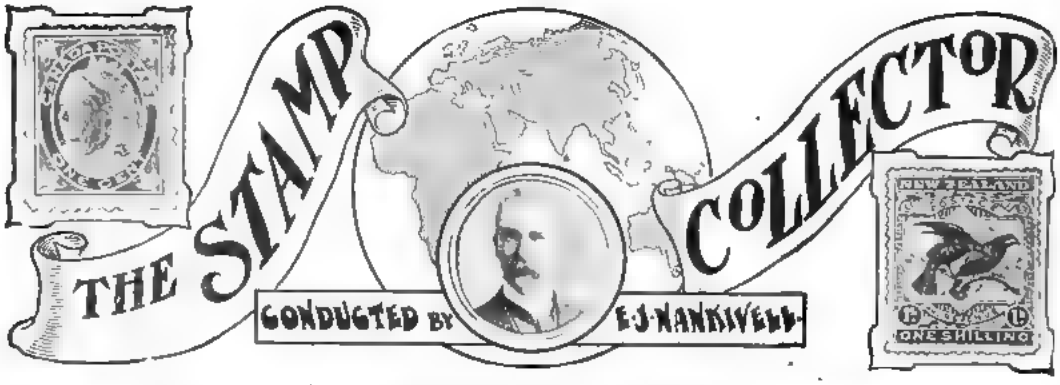
"Now you'd better trot," said Maisie. I confess I was a little disappointed; as she'd gone so far, she might as well have gone the whole hog, and asked us to tea. However, it was no use stopping after such a plain hint, so we cut off.

* * * * *

Now I'll explain how it was Stretton showed himself such a sportsman. Next day in Big School after prayers, the Head announced that our form would have a half-holiday according to the tradition of the School, as no boy in the form had been sent up for detention. Dickie and I felt awfully nervous, and I looked anxiously across at Stretton. He didn't say anything, but he looked a bit puzzled. Probably he thought the porter had forgotten to take the list up. Anyhow, he kept his mouth shut, and Dickie and I had a ripping afternoon to ourselves.

A VERY SHARP FROST.

"What's the matter, Tommy?"
"I fell in the ice, and those men have just sawn me out. I'm off home to get melted down."
Drawn by Tom Browne, R.I.



ON SWOPPING STAMPS.

WAS there ever a boy worth his salt that did not take a special delight in swopping his surplus stock of bats, or balls, or white mice, or stamps for other articles? And when a couple of keen swoppers get to business there isn't usually much margin for bragging of a bargain on either side at the conclusion of the transaction. But there are rules for the game. Some boys are naturally very generous, but a greedy boy will take all he can get, and give as little as possible in exchange. Hence, as the great majority of English boys love fair play, there are understood rules for swopping, in order that too generous boys may not be imposed upon, and that greedy boys may not gorge themselves with ill-gotten gains.

In stamps, swopping may be reduced to quite a science. Most boys are ever ready to start a chum collecting stamps with a small lot, for, by getting another companion to go in for the same hobby, the circle of interest is widened, and the gathering ground is generally considerably increased. As a consequence, new stamps are secured all round

After a decent start has been made it is better to place the swopping of stamps, even amongst the most intimate chums, on an agreed basis. It is simple enough to go on giving and accepting ordinary duplicates without any hard and fast basis of value, but, as time goes on, and you dip into more expensive stamps, the day comes when even between the most generously-minded chums there must be an increasing awkwardness in accepting the free gift of valuable stamps. Your chum may have the good fortune to get the run of valuable stamps, which he could easily sell to dealers for considerable amounts that would enable him to greatly enrich his collection. You would feel it to be very awkward to be always accepting such duplicates without some arrangement as to swopping value for value.

Those and similar little difficulties are more easily arranged in the pursuit of stamp collecting than in any other hobby. You merely agree that in future you will exchange on a catalogue basis. That is to say, you take one of the well-known catalogues, and agree that the value of a stamp for exchange shall be determined by that catalogue. For instance, your fellow collector has a kind relative in the South African trade, and he saves all the stamps from his correspondence for him. Here's a 5s. King's head, Transvaal, of which he has a duplicate to spare. You refer to the catalogue, and you find it is priced 6s. 3d. used. You want that stamp for your collection. So your friend has to find duplicates to the like value in what you can spare, or if you have none that he needs you agree that you are indebted to him for that value from the next lot of duplicates you get.

It is well for the purposes of personal exchange, to hinge all good duplicates into a small memorandum book that you can carry easily in your pocket. In this book all the stamps should be plainly marked with the catalogue values. Then, when you meet a collector you can exchange books and swop away to your heart's content.

Of course there is the question of condition. It is not a fair exchange to give, or take, a damaged, or heavily cancelled copy for one that is undamaged and lightly cancelled.

It is surprising what a good collection of stamps a young collector can get together, if he makes a practice of carrying a nice, plainly-priced book of temptingly clean and desirable duplicates. Fellow collectors get to know the contents of that book, and in their desire to secure those that tempt them most they hunt up stamps that will secure an exchange. And if the possessor of the nice book of tempting duplicates lets it be known that they are only to be had in exchange for nice copies of stamps he needs, he will soon find that his book of duplicates will secure him several splendid helpers in the building up of his own collection.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. H. L.-W. (Folkestone).—As there are several albums about the price you mention you had better write each of the album publishers for a price list and specimen pages, and then make your own selection. Consult our advertisement pages.

Durban Scot (Natal).—There are two mulready envelopes, one 1d., black, and the other 2d., blue. You do not say which yours is. But they are catalogued, the 1d. at 12s. 6d., and the 2d. at 70s., used. New Zealand, 1856, Colonial printing, 2d., blue, imperf., blue paper, is catalogued at 14s., used. The first issue of Belgium was made in 1849-52, and there were no 40 cents in that issue. Yours are probably the second issue, 1850. Of this issue, the 20 cents, blue, is catalogued at 1s., used, and the 40 cents, carmine, at 3s. 6d., used.

A. F. P. (Hackney).—Stanley Gibbons' Catalogue, parts I. and II., price 2s. each, and Bright's "A. B. C.," will give you the catalogue value of watermarked and unwatermarked stamps. What percentage you may take as the "exact" value is rather a poser, so much depends on the class of stamps and their variety. If they are ordinary stamps, you may say for used about 25 per cent. of catalogue, good stamps cataloguing from 5s. upwards, from 25 to 50 per cent., very rare stamps from 50 to 75 per cent. of catalogue. But I must warn you that this is a very rough and ready, though probably fairly reliable, basis for valuation. Your better plan will be to get a priced catalogue of a few of the auctions, and draw your own conclusions from those realised prices.

W. J. W. (Otago, New Zealand).—Northern Nigerias are worth much more than they are priced in Gibbons' 1903 catalogue. I should say at least double. Many thanks for N. Z. special delivery, but I do not chronicle, or advise readers of THE CAPTAIN to collect, special delivery stamps.

H. O. (Colchester).—Yes, Labuans were surcharged "4 cents" in 1889. I should say their value is *nil*. They are regarded as rubbish made for sale to collectors.

G. Y. P. (Blyth).—Your oblong Orange Free State stamp is only a fiscal, and therefore of no value in postage stamp collection. But there are fiscal collections. The value, however, of a used copy of the one pound stamp is only a few pence.

G. J. (Lichfield).—The Transvaal 2d., surcharged "E.R.I. Halfpenny," is catalogued at 2d. The addition "Passed Press Censor" makes it worth keeping as a curiosity, but does not add to the philatelic value.

M. V. S. (Lutterworth).—I cannot tell the value of your Ceylon stamp from your description. You do not even say what the face value of the stamp is. There are lots of brown Ceylons.

Ab. (Radstock).—Unused are preferable to used, even where the used are worth a little more by catalogue. So far as values are concerned, the unused will probably increase in value much more than the used. Unless the used has some special significance, such as settling the date of issue, the question of a stamp having been issued for use, etc., unused should be preferred. The 1d. black English was cancelled in black, as well as in red.

Constant Reader (London).—The Oil Rivers Protectorate, ½d. on English, unused, is catalogued at 6d.

S. C. C. (Highgate).—Brussels Exhibition stamps are of very little value. They are catalogued at 1d. each, but you would probably find it difficult to get 1d. a dozen for them. They are mere advertising rubbish.

M. E. (Southport).—Inverted watermarks are not regarded as making any difference in the value of a stamp.

J. B. (Brooklyn, N. Y.).—The firm you name is reliable for new issues. There is no really good stamp journal published in Canada. You cannot do better than get Bright's movable leaf albums, as you propose, as a cheap form of movable leaves. They were suggested by us in the first place, and you will find such an article as you ask for in THE CAPTAIN, vol. 5., p. 138. All my own stamps are mounted on those handy little movable leaf albums. In arranging your stamps you can get a neat effect in rows of three on a page, about 3/8 of an inch apart. Canadians I arrange in rows of three distinct shades of each value. Fill up your rows of shades as they turn up. With *Gibbons' Monthly Journal* and the *American Journal of Philately* you should be well posted. You should take Northern as well as Southern Nigeria.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Bright and Son.—Seychelles, 3c. on 18c. Malta, 2½d.

Premier Stamp Co.—Bermuda, 3d.

Whitfield King and Co.—Seychelles, 3c. on 18c. Cyprus, 1p. and 4p.

Two Famous "Special" Correspondents.

SEE "CHRISTMAS WITH A.P.," ON PAGE 197.

A. PEARSE ("SPHERE") AND MELTON PRIOR ("ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS"), SPECIAL ARTISTS AT COWES DURING H.M. THE KING'S STAY THERE IN 1902.

Photo by W. W. Kirk and Sons. By permission.

"CAPTAIN" CLUB

CONTRIBUTIONS.

This part of the Magazine is set aside for Members of the CAPTAIN Club with literary and artistic aspirations. Articles, poems, etc., should be kept quite short. Drawings should be executed on stiff board in Indian ink. CAPTAIN Club contributions are occasionally used in other parts of the Magazine.

BOOKS by CAPTAIN authors are awarded to Penaway Dacre, W. M. Pryke, and Seymour C. Smith. Each prize-winner is requested to forward his present address, and at the same time to select a book.

Ghosts and Haunted Houses.

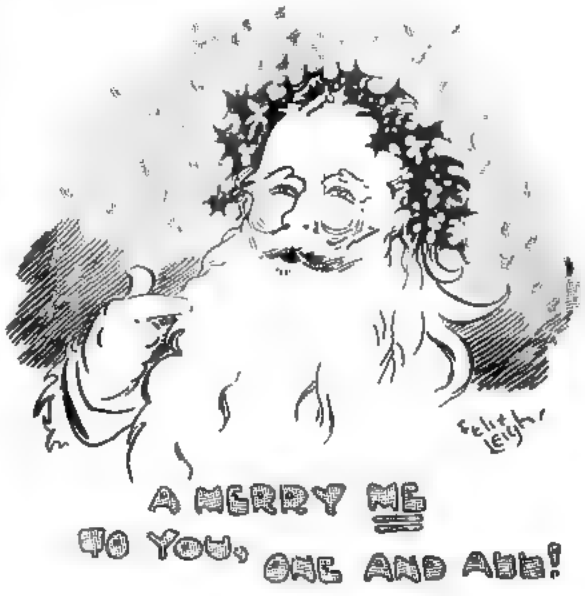
GHOST stories are not half so popular as they were years ago, when spectres roamed the passages in the moonlight, and each large house had its haunted chamber, but though most people jeer at ghosts, you will find that they will all own to some spectral experience. I do not refer to spiritual sèances, table rapping, and the like nonsense, but to ghostly appearances.

I have only had one ghostly experience. Where we live in the summer there is a wide stretch of green common between the town and the sea-front. One night when I was crossing this common I felt a touch on my shoulder. I looked round, and lo! there was not a soul to be seen! Thinking that I was mistaken, I quickened my pace. Suddenly I felt the touch again. With a strange eerie feeling I turned, and there stood the ghost of an old schoolfellow. After a moment he vanished, and then—well, then I ran! Whenever I tell this tale I get scoffed at, but nothing can shake my conviction that it was a ghost.

Some years ago a friend of mine lived in a haunted house. Coming home late one night he was surprised to see his dog cower down by his side, moaning as though in fear. Looking up, he saw that two of the windows were illuminated by a strange bluish light. In vain he tried to persuade the dog to enter the house; eventually he had to go in alone. He spent that night packing his things, and left the next day.

A schoolfellow of mine lives in a somewhat old house, and his bed stands beneath a large window. Sometimes when he wakes up at night the window is lighted brilliantly, at other times it is quite dark. One night he saw, palely outlined in the moonlight, the forms of two men. One knelt in a supplicating attitude before the other, as though asking for mercy or pardon. After a moment the spectres vanished, and all was dark again.

I have heard many tales of mysterious warnings. In one family death was foretold by the sound of something falling. Sitting in the kitchen they heard a bump overhead, as though a chair had fallen over. This sound was repeated three times. Next day they heard of the death of their uncle, who lived in London. Another man told me that he was sitting in his library when he heard a tap on the window. Looking up, he saw his dearest friend gazing through at



him. They stared at each other for a full minute, and then the man at the window turned and went. That night my informant heard that his friend had died in bed *at the very moment that his apparition had appeared at the window!*

PENAWAY DACRE.

Memories.

[By an Old Boy.]

AS a small boy I was at a French school abroad. We English were all right when we got into a green field for Prisoner's Base. We played this game at Rugby, too, and Charles Dakyns, the best football player that ever played—many say that ever will play—got his extraordinary quickness from it. Bullying was kept in the background by fighting. A one-armed boy was worried too much by a bigger boy, so he fought him, and his blows were double as hard as the two-handed boy's, so he was not bullied any more. There were other fights, too. I remember two brothers pelting a big boy, who was rowing, with sods, and the big fellow came ashore and hunted the brothers into a wheat-field, and pounded them, and they pounded him. It was a great fight, and they shook hands and were friends ever after. One of the brothers now commands a regiment of the line, and is a C.B., a distinction gained by good service and that great march which saved so many men after Colenso fight in the recent Boer War.

THE TWO FACES.
A curious untouched snapshot by F. C. Turner, Preston.

At Rugby we were quite certain that the best boys were our leaders, and would do what they could for the honour of the school. When walking one day with two schoolfellows, one began a story, evidently a bad one, but his friend, a præposter, cut it short with a threat of 100 lines. Perhaps you do not think that boys could be so particular, but they were, and every boy in authority in any school ought to be particular, if he wishes well for the school, his friends, and himself. Small boys, middle boys, and those that are nearly men, are a curious and interesting race, and can only be studied when boyhood is long past and gone.

E. F. T. B.

A Christmas Custom at Ottery St. Mary.

THERE is an ancient and interesting custom, still in vogue in the town of Ottery St. Mary, Devon, connected with the festival of the Nativity of Christ. At twelve o'clock midnight, on Christmas Eve, the bellman of the parish begins to make a circuit of the principal houses in the town, starting from the vicarage. He stops at each house, and, having rung his bell, recites the following lines :—

"At the Nativity of Christ Our Lord,
The Angels did rejoice with one accord;
Let Christians imitate them here on Earth,
And crown this day with joy and pious mirth."

He then proclaims the exact time of the morning, and the condition of the weather, and, after having again rung his bell, passes on to the next house. The bellman employs from three to four hours in making his circuit; at certain houses he is expected to stop and receive hospitality, while the family indulge in carol singing. The custom dates from very early times, and there are, I believe, but few places where such a relic of the past still survives.

W. MAURICE PAYNE.

Captain Prizes—Volume IX.

IN the six numbers comprising volume nine of THE CAPTAIN, the following prizes were awarded :—

£5 8s. in cash, £2 12s. 6d. worth of goods from advertisement pages, three bicycles, twenty-eight hand cameras, twenty-three cricket bats, six sets of boxing gloves, eight Sandow's Combined Developers, three tennis racquets,

THE 22ND OF THE MONTH AT DREW MEMORIAL PARSONAGE, BELFAST.
By Seymour C. Smith.

THE OLD SANDY HOOK LIGHTHOUSE.

This famous lighthouse was built by the Dutch over 200 years ago, and is the first light sighted from the ships on approaching New York Harbour.

By Walter P. Robertson.

twelve printing outfits, eight sets of drawing materials, six fountain pens, six post-card albums, and six pocket knives. Consolation prizes consisted of ninety-eight magazine volumes or books, while five hundred and six packets of CAPTAIN post-cards were sent to honourably-mentioned competitors. Foreign and colonial readers were awarded money prizes to the value of £3 12s., and "CAPTAIN Club" contributors gained thirteen books. Grand total of prizes—241.

P. DACRE.

Literary Criticisms.

P. Dacre writes:—"In the September CAPTAIN, R. G. Hugo, criticising 'A Little Cameo of Low Life,' takes exception to that part which refers to the old woman and the coster lads, saying that, in all the nine years during which he has known Balham, he has never witnessed any such conduct. The incident occurred at three o'clock in the afternoon on Bedford Hill, and I put it down exactly as I saw it. Mr. Hugo also says that Balham is 'by no means the resort of all the cads and cadgers of South London.' I did not intend to represent it as such, but tried to reproduce the scene exactly as it was, with no additions whatever. The same thing may be seen in almost any London suburb on a Saturday night. If I gave the impression that Balham was the abode of cads, and a locality noted for rowdiness, I can only say that I had no intention of doing so."—[Mr. Dacre having explained, let us hope we have now heard the last of this subject.—O.F.]

M. Ouchteriony.—Don't write your name and address on every page. Your "York Cathedral" savours too much of the guide-book.

"Floreat Lindum" and C. J. Thompson.—The latter part of the above criticism applies as well to your contributions. Don't send me essays about places that one can look up for one's self in a guide-book. Make your contributions bright and original.

Ernest Charles.—You have poetical instinct. Send further samples—*shorter* ones. I may be able to judge better of your ability if I see some more of your work. There is nothing, I must add, particularly striking or original in your descriptive poem "Dawn." Your clear writing is most welcome to my eyes.

F. N. Brierly.—Hope to print "Pitch Lake." Your spelling, my good sir, is very much below par. Still, the interest of your article saved it from the gaping jaws of the Office Dog.

T. R. D.—It was rather good of the sailors telling you that the Government paid a man £5 a year to whitewash the cliffs of Dover! I can quite imagine a very little boy "swallowing" this. There is not much, however, in the other anecdotes.

Nemo.—Your "Jottings about Ashinoyu" is not particularly interesting. At least, I do not find it so. Try me with something else.

P. W. Bennett.—Your "Plea for more Story-telling Photos" will appear as soon as I can find space for it.

P. L. Holmes.—Photos too dim to reproduce well.

F. Coombes.—No, sir, you'll have to try a stretch longer before you take rank among our poets. You are clubbed, though, according to request—if that is any consolation to you.

"Naval Cadet Esse."—Well, when you have got into the Navy you can send us a breezy article about your "first day aboard H.M.S. Whatever-she happens-to-be." The article you send us is full of figures and dates, and I don't like 'em. By the way, don't put six CAPTAIN stamps on a letter to *us*. Put them on your letters to friends—one at a time.

Harold Scholfield.—I hope to use your "Bill Jones" some time next cricket season.

Jack L.—You should have called your article "Orkney Curiosities," and squeezed all the most interesting facts into about three or four hundred words, leaving out the account of your wanderings. That is the way to please an editor.

K. D. (Montreal).—The anecdote is excellent, but I cannot publish copied matter, even though you mention the source from which it was obtained. Next time, pray go to the trouble of writing out your contribution properly, and not sending it in the form of a letter. It is always worth a contributor's while to take pains and refrain from dispatching things in a hurry. I have to fag through piles of CAPTAIN Club Contributions, and so I am grateful to people who study me by writing neatly and paying attention to punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

D. Campbell. As you will have seen, one of our readers has already dealt with "Football in Switzerland.

"Wanderer."—I regret to say that I really have no room for the account of your walking tour.

Albert Albrow.—I am sorry I opened your carefully-compiled "Catches" article far too late to be able to make use of it. I may add that I do not want any more articles of this kind.

"Puella." –Your "Daymare" poem is bright and lively, but too long—far too long. Consider our space, my dear! The best thing in it is where you describe your flight from the Office Dog, and Mr. Fry's sudden appearance and rebuke to the effect that you are not breathing properly. The other contribution, "The Wallace Collection," I hope to use

J. H. Skuse. –There are funny snatches in your tale about Podge, but it's hardly good enough for the space it would occupy. It amused me to hear that Podge was shut up in a room with a geography and a bundle of tracts to make him good. The little poem, too, has merit—but not enough. Never mind. Go on!

Harry Payne.—I like contributors to be original, and not send me imitations. You have ability. Use it in original efforts.

H. F. G. Harvey. Your prose, though evidencing ability on your part, is a trifle old fashioned, and you set down your thoughts in a manner which might strike a reader as somewhat dull. Your subject, too, is an old one. Everybody is acquainted with the qualities of Dickens's work. Choose more modern topics, and condense your remarks into a smaller space.

Art Criticisms.

"Ambidextrous Amateur."—As a copyist you are very clever. Editing a comic paper is about your line, when you get the chance. Several well-known black and white artists draw with the left hand, viz., Louis Wain and George Hawley.

W. J. Goodbrand (Durban). (1) Not suitable for publication, though clever. You write an excellent letter. (2) Your second attempt much better; no space

Dorothy G. Riley. –Try again, Dolly; an elephant or a mouse.

Eric Lawson (Wellington, N.Z.).—You were too late for Photo Competition. Send direct to C.C. and you may win a prize.

E. Alliott (Nottingham). Snapshots all good, but not of sufficient interest Get figures in the foreground.

K. Glover (Gosforth).—Clever designs, but shouldn't advise you to be an artist. Your pen work is just average.

"Livingstone."—(1) The longest "mile" I know is the Hesse Mile, 19.547 English yards, and the shortest the Chinese Yis, 624 yards. (2) Pen drawing is not so popular as brush drawing, as the former is more difficult.

Maurice Peterson (Montreal).—You are Clubbed. Photo too faint; send another.

Frank Swallow.—Thanks, oh no! Idea not so "rotten."

J. Scott (Dundalk).—Clever open line work; quite above the average.

G. Debardon (Liverpool).—Shall use photo if room. Yes, your guess is correct.

W. R. Rose.—Very interesting. I was in Algiers some time ago. Use if space.

Colin A. Arrol.—Will use in a future number

R. F. Megginson.—Smart, but not of interest

G. E. A. (Folkestone).—Doubt whether room for *s.s. Arabic*.

G. T. D.—(1) You have practically no ability. (2) When it is noon at Greenwich, in Dublin it is 11 35 a.m.; in Edinburgh 11 45 a.m.; New York, 7.4 a.m.; Pekin, 7.46 p.m.; and Sydney, 10.5 p.m.

R. Meeke.—Brownie snaps too faint.

Pat C. C.– Candidly, they are *not* great.

Jaibée (Paisley).—You have ability, but don't "take to art" further than to amuse yourself.

F. W. Atterbury (Killiney).—Will use round tower when space permitteth.

R. J. Baumgartner.—Snapshots not of sufficient interest. No stamp enclosed. We cannot answer C. C. letters by return of post.

"Ranji."—(1) Post your drawings and MS. to the Editor, and put in stamped addressed envelope. Cannot say what remuneration; all papers differ on this point.

J. S. Newman.—A very worthy drawing. Sky slightly mixed up with the sails, though. Use more water with your work.

Phyllis Dacre (Ilkley).—(1) No, do not affix CAPTAIN stamps on postcards. (2) We cannot reproduce pictorial postcards, as they are the copyright of the photographer who took the picture.

"Jacob."—Smart; more careful practice wanted.

H. C. Tomlen. (Leicester) Shall use A. O. Jones during the season, if room.

H. Blofeld (Highbury).—When space permits shall use the photo.

"Pussy" (Haverford Grammar School). I am sorry to say the photos are all too indistinct. Have another shot.

"Springfield."—The maze is beyond me; work such things out more clearly.

K. R. Murray. The faces are good and funny, but too much alike. What a lot of snub-nosed fellows you must know!

Contributions have also been received from:—D. Wheatley (accepted), W. J. C. Nettleton, A. W. H. (accepted), G. Franklin, D. C. Macgregor, "General" (accepted), V. J. Wells, "Tod" (accepted), "Fryite," Joseph Carley, G. E. Beaumont, J. H. Young (Dorking), Harold Watkins, Will Morton, E. A. Taylor (Sudbury), G. H. S. (Hastings), Daphne K. Stow (Hanley Castle), J. F. Iredale, C. T. Kennis, W. A. S. Statter (Wellington College), H. J. Judd, and others whose names will appear next month.

"CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS FOR DECEMBER.

Last day for sending in, December 14th.

NOTICE.—At the top of the first page the following particulars must be clearly written, thus :—

Competition No. ——, Class ——, Name ——,
Address ——, Age ——.

Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete, and in the event of their proving successful in competitions where cricket-bats, &c., are offered as prizes, will be allowed to select other articles of similar value.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners; not pins.

Address envelopes and postcards as follows:—Competition No. ——, Class ——, THE CAPTAIN, 12 Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions should reach us by Dec. 14th.

The Results will be published in February.

AGE RULE: A Competitor may enter for (say) an age limit 25 competition, so long as he has not actually turned 26. The same rule applies to all the other age limits.

No. 1.—**"My Favourite Competition."**—We will award Three New Columbia Graphophones, as illustrated on THE CAPTAIN Prizes page, to the senders of the three best Letters (to the "Old Fag") on the sort of Competition they like best. To the two competitors in each class next in order of merit we will award a Set of Messrs. Harbutt's "Plasticine Designer." Letters must not exceed 300 words in length.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II. ...	Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III.	Age limit: Fifteen.

No. 2.—**"Drawing of a Loaf."**—As "big loaves" and "little loaves" are now exercising the minds of your fathers and uncles, you might keep the matter before their eyes by making a drawing of *an ordinary household loaf*, in pen, pencil, or water-colours. To the senders of the three best drawings we will award Three of Messrs. H. Gradidge and Sons' half-guinea Footballs (Association or Rugby)—or, in the case of girl winners, Hockey Sticks—as illustrated on THE CAPTAIN Prizes page.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty
Class II.	Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III.	Age limit: Twelve.

No. 3.—**"Comic Sentence."**—Write, on a CAPTAIN pictorial post-card (a packet of which can be obtained from this office for 1½d., post free), a comic sentence composed from the leading lines of CAPTAIN advertisements in the present number, as, for instance, "A Gradidge Football is a Delightful Companion and an Admirable Food for all Seeking a Profession." To the senders of the six best sentences will be awarded Six of Messrs. Benetfink and Co.'s Hockey Sticks, as illustrated on THE CAPTAIN Prizes page.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty two.
Class II.	Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III.	Age limit: Fifteen.

No. 4.—**"Photographic Competition."**—Send a print from your best negative; any subject. *Photographs must be original, and not copied from the work of others.* Neatness in mounting will be taken into consideration. Prizes: Three "Swan" Fountain Pens, value 10s. 6d. each, as illustrated on THE CAPTAIN Prizes page.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty one.
Class II.	Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III.	Age limit: Fourteen.

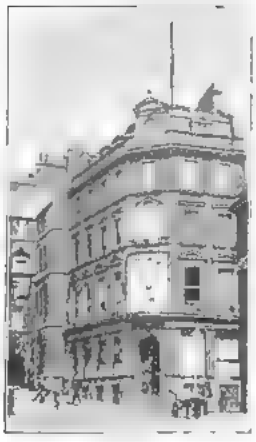
No. 5.—**"The Poets and the Sea."**—Send the best poetical extract you know, dealing with "the Sea." Two Handsome Albums will be the Prizes.

Class I.	Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II.	Age limit: Eighteen.

No. 6.—**"Handwriting."**—Copy, in your best every day handwriting, the first seven lines of "Christmas with A. P.," on page 197. Prizes: Two of Messrs. Benetfink and Co.'s Footballs; to the four next, in order of merit in each Class, a Set of Harbutt's "Plasticine Designer" as illustrated on THE CAPTAIN Prizes page.

Class I.	Age limit: Sixteen.
Class II	Age limit: Twelve.

13 BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND, LONDON.



MY IDEAL CHRISTMAS.

It was rather sharp of the Art-Editor to think of this idea. It is entirely his idea. He said to me: "Why not write to all our regular contributors and ask them to describe their 'Ideal Christmas'"? "Full speed ahead!" I replied, knowing the Art-Ed.'s partiality for nautical language, he having crossed the Atlantic thirty times, and suffered shipwreck thrice. "Aye, aye, sir," sang out the Art-Ed., getting to work on the letters with his usual alert seamanship. The results of the Art-Ed.'s breezy suggestion are appended, and a goodly symposium they make.

First I should like to give you a golden fragment from the pen of Mr. Franklin Welles Calkins, the talented American author. But we must be content with his "Picked Seven" story, and the further adventures of Etapa and Zintkala, which you will find in this number. I doubt if I have ever read a more delightfully human and pleasing tale of Christmas than "The Picked Seven at Hatband," and, hardened old editor though I am, my heart went out to Zintkala and Etapa while I was correcting the proofs of the chapters included in this issue. Could anything be more touching than this account of two children's wanderings, of their perils and escapes, of their simple thanksgivings, of the lad's manliness and stout heart, of the little girl's devotion to her brother when he lay sick unto death!

So, as there's no time to write to New York, we must do without a contribution from Mr. Calkins. Mr. Wodehouse, however, is as close as an author can be—down the street at the *Globe* office—and the writer of that jolly serial, *The Gold Bat*, pops in with the following:

MY IDEAL CHRISTMAS.

I DON'T think I can improve on Dickens. The Christmas in *Pickwick* has always struck me as the sort of Christmas I should most like to spend, bar falling into the pond, which I could dispense with. My ideal Christmas would be passed solely with people I know intimately; people who could be relied on to ask me neither to play round games nor to sing. Round games poison any day of festivity. There is one in particular, called "Are you there, Moriarty?"—but the subject is painful. Also there must be snow (not too much) and a sharp frost. Finally, I should prefer to spend Christmas in the country. Old manor house—wassail—flickering fire-light—ghost stories, and that sort of thing. That's me.

Now for a little poetry. All of you have admired Mr. Felix Leigh's clever comic pictures (not to mention the clever wording he supplies to them), and so you'll be interested in this poetical effusion from his pliant and inventive nib:

MY IDEAL CHRISTMAS—THIS YEAR!

Now, to tell you the truth, Mr. Editor, *mine*
Would be spent on some tropical island,
Where the skies, as a rule, were more soft and benign
Than are those which are spread over *my* land.

It is there 'neath the shade of a palm I would lie,
With a pipe and my CAPTAIN to cheer me,
'Mid a landscape that smiled under Phœbus's eye,
Lemon-squash in a "wassail bowl" near me!

If the notion sounds rum, I am free to aver
You may strike upon others much rummer.
Isn't change always charming? By Jove, my dear sir,
I got tired of our winter *last summer!*

FELIX LEIGH.

Mr. Swainson has been too long absent from our pages, and a querying note as to the wherefore which I sent him the other day, elicited the explanation that he "has just reached the twelfth chapter of a

MY IDEAL CHRISTMAS—THIS YEAR!
By Felix Leigh.

new serial." I hope that story will be in my hands before long. Meanwhile, Mr. Swainson conjures up the following attractive picture of

AN IDEAL CHRISTMAS.

My ideal Christmas pre-supposes the ideal house, the ideal people, the ideal winter weather. Let me show you the house first. It is old, large, and rambling, and the lawn slopes down to a frozen lake—a floor, blue-black, like steel, by day, and a wondrous silver plain when the moon rides through the sky in the soundless, windless, frosted night. I fill that old house with my dearest friends. I spirit Jack from India, Charlie from Manchester, Dick from that mine in Spain, Sydney from the Threadneedle-street Old Lady, and I dig Joe out of Glasgow's yellow fogs and summon other dear friends from North, South, East, and West. I depend on Tessa to invite Dorothy, Chris, and Ethel, Muriel, Hilda and Florence, and I fine half-a-crown any one who prefixes Mister or Miss to any Christian name. Has it not been an ideal Christmas! There is no good guessing what Tessa's friends may do before lunch, but each man, I know, will have unlocked his gun-case and tumbled out his pet cartridges before he eats his first breakfast. He can choose his own shooting, from duck in the gloaming to rabbits on the covert sides. Ice, of course, was made for afternoons . . . *ergo*, a general rally there after lunch. Of evenings, Ethel will arrange some music, Dorothy, I know, will insist on at least one dance, and some one will breathe that thrilling word "Theatricals." Then, after the songs, the very last *Extra*, the final drop of the curtain, as the case may be, when the girls have gone upstairs—I am not so unsophisticated as to suppose they've gone to bed—I can see my half of the Idealists trickling into the billiard-room, dearly-beloved briars and Arcadian mixtures will make a pale blue, smoky Elysium, and yarns of old friends, of the old school, the old college, and the wide world will keep us there round the fire until the wee sma' hours. Then, as old Pepys has it, "And so, merry, to bed."

Mr. Hervey generally sends us tales about tigers, and here he is in his usual blood-thirsty mood. You wouldn't think he was blood-thirsty to look at him, but he is —*very*! Even at Christmas his thoughts dwell on "tingling frays" and "forest beasts," and he has had to dash into poetry in order to relieve his feelings:

MY IDEA OF AN "IDEAL CHRISTMAS."

Sing ho! for the jungle deep and dank,
With a rifle in my hand,
Where the tiger prowls and the cheetah growls,
And the elephant takes his stand,
And the python lurks unseen, my lads,
To drop upon its prey;
I'd far prefer my Christmas, sir,
Eight thousand miles away!

THE ART EDITOR IS VERY SORRY, BUT HE IS UNABLE TO SEE YOU THIS MORNING.
By E. S. Hodgson.

What are the joys of pudding and beef,
And the turkey stuff'd with stuff,
And the lollipops and carpet hops,
And the game of blindman's buff,
Compar'd to a shooting trip, my boys,
And a rousing, tingling fray,
With some forest beast in the gorgeous East,
Eight thousand miles away!

H. J. A. Hervey.

Mr. A. E. Johnson stands 6 ft. 1 inch in his stockings, and is a serious man, fond of deep-sea fishing and blowing off government cartridges in his capacity as a full private of the Artists' Volunteer corps. After hearing of these virile pursuits, you may be surprised to read the following very mild and inoffensive catalogue of Mr. Johnson's Christmas requirements:

My Ideal Christmas.

Frost snow, skates, toboggans, stockings, presents, cards, turkey, sausages (plenty of sausages), plum-pudding, crackers, games, Christmas tree, holly, mistletoe (in convenient places), snap dragon —and *lots of children*—A. E. Johnson.

The Photo. Editor is pleased to be playful, for, in reply to the Art-Ed.'s query, he wrote:

Camera Corner, "Captain" Office.

Dear Sir,—An "Ideal Christmas"! What can be expected upon such a subject from a photographic Editor? Well, may there be snow, may there be frost, may there be ice, may there be sunshine—in fact, a glorious, bright and happy time. May none of us spend Christmas in a "Dark Room." If there must be "Dry Plates," let's have 'em after dinner, with the walnuts and the wine. Then, calling to our aid "Flashlight Photography," let us, in the twinkling of an eye, sketch with invisible pen a picture of how an "Ideal Christmas" was spent, Anno Domini one thousand nine hundred and three!—Yours very truly, Charles W. Hastings (Photo Editor).

Mr. Stanley is one of the most promising rhymsters I am acquainted with. He gets home with a regular corkscrew effect in his final verse. One of these days Mr. Stanley will be writing lyrics for musical plays unless he takes to the Higher Poetry.

A Few Reflections on an Ideal Christmas.
(With due acknowledgment to Mr. Barrie.)

Let me burn my hands and chestnuts,
At a fire composed of "Best Nuts,"
Snugly basking in the Yule coals' cheery glow;
Let me frolic through the lancers,
With a merry maze of dancers—
Or sit out beneath the M—*Holly*, dontcherknow!

Though my taste may seem abnormal,
I'll be pleased if some kind storm'll
Show a little true—if somewhat cold—politeness,
By tastefully adorning
Mother Earth, on Christmas morning,
With a bran new Winter "garb of dazzling whiteness."

And our national proclivity,
To overdo festivity,
I think we might endeavour to obliterate,
By being very wary
Of allowing "*Little Mary*,"
To determine the amount that ev'ry crittur ate.

Arthur Stanley.

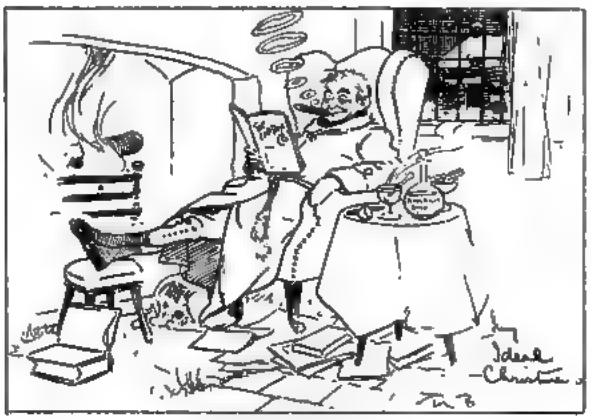
Mr. Edward J. Nankivell, little as you may think it, does not occupy his mind entirely with stamp-collecting. He devotes three periods of ten minutes *per diem* to thinking of food, six hours to sleep, and five minutes to exercise (three times round the garden at ten miles an hour). On Saturday afternoon, in the warm months of the year, he plays bowls, and at this pastime he has inflicted severe defeats on Tom Browne, R.I., and the Art-Editor of The Captain. He has also, indeed, invited the O. F. to battle with him on the level greensward, but bowls, I may tell you, is far too quiet a game for *me*! However, this is the Christmas Number, and so we must get on to the Philatelic Editor's "Ideal" Christmas, which seems, from the letter quoted hereunder, to be a very amiable sort of one. I have no doubt that, during the course of the day, Mr. N. steals away for a quiet half-hour amongst his beloved Transvaals and Uruguayans; otherwise, his Christmas is that of a contented and happy family man.

My Ideal Christmas.

A jolly Christmas family party installed in my shanty; a bundle of greetings from absent friends a sheaf of unexpected cheques by the first post, but no other communication whatever with the business world, and the country around declared clear of Editors.

Edward J. Nankivell.

Anybody would suppose that Tom Browne was an elderly gentleman of eight-and-fifty to look at the picture of his Ideal Christmas. Instead of sitting before a roaring fire, in a dressing-gown, with a decanter of Roderick Dhu whatever that may be—at his elbow, and a big cigar in his mouth, I will tell you how he will spend Christmas Day. At eight a.m., sharp, he will be out on Blackheath Common playing golf with the Art-Ed. (to whom he gives a stroke a hole). At nine he will consume a tremendous breakfast. From ten to ten-thirty he will glance through his morning paper, and at eleven his horse will be brought round to the front door, and he will go for a two-hours' canter. Lunch having been discussed, he will indulge in an hour's spin on his motor-car (the Art-Ed. hanging on to the back seat for dear life—with blue lips and



By Tom Browne, R.I.

a glassy eye), and then, dusk having fallen, he will play billiards in his studio till dinner-time. Over what he will then do I will draw a decent veil, for I do not wish to hurt the feelings of my good vegetarian readers. After dinner he will give a children's party in his studio, and then, the children having gone off, happy with many presents and sugar-plums, he will loll in an easy-chair in front of his great studio stove and tell the Art-Ed. anecdotes of his wanderings in Spain and Holland. When Tom B. is eight-and-fifty he *may* spend Christmas Day in front of a big fire, but, as he is only eight-and-twenty, his idea of an enjoyable day is at present rather less passive than what he is pleased to depict in the little drawing he has sent us.

The Competition Editor hurls the following Tennysonian echo at my unoffending head:

MY IDEAL CHRISTMAS.

In mood anti-melancholic,
I will gambol and I'll frolic,
And I'll sport with Billy Jones and Charlie Thompson;
I'll caper and I'll chuckle,
'Cos I haven't got to buckle
To and get a sack—or three—of CAPTAIN comps done!

The Idea Merchant—what! did you think I had forgotten him!—was applied to for a contribution, and you may imagine our grief on receiving the following laconic epistle:

H.M. Prison, Holloway,
London, N.

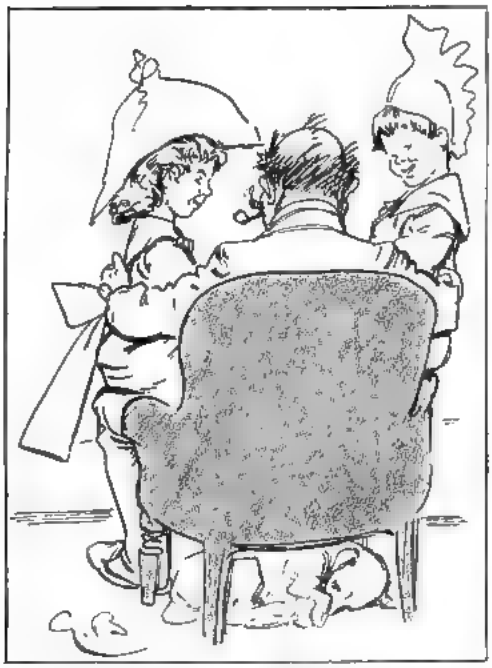
DEAR O. F.,—Am here for three months for differing with a gentleman on the fiscal question. In the struggle I managed to break four out of his five ribs.

Yours in tears,
O. F., Esq. THE IDEA MERCHANT.

Mr. Cockburn Reynolds spent his childhood in India—where he made the acquaintance of "Jungly"—and seemingly he would have us believe that, when a boy, he was no better than other boys. Anyhow, here we have him, sitting on a wall, devouring a plum-pudding and sowing the seeds of life-long dyspepsia. Jungly, in his one simple garment, appears to be helping him with praiseworthy zeal. What happened to little Cockburn when the theft was discovered, and what Kurrypowda Fishsauca Al Spollopinarisvats—father to the said Jungly—did to his son and heir, Mr. Reynolds does not mention. But we can well imagine.

As to myself, do you want to know what *my* idea of an Ideal Christmas is? Well, well, my young friends, I never like to disoblige you, and so I will tell you. I like to go away to a midland village I know very well, remote from pantomimes and splashing cab-wheels and hooting newsboys, and there to stay in a house that has seen two or three hundred Christmasses. I like to observe the lads and lassies coming back to this village year after year at Christmastide, "to see the old folk," and I like to watch them troop into church on Christmas morning and sing the old Christmas hymns that we never tire of. Though there may be no snow and no ice, yet it is Christmas in our hearts, and so, as each succeeding Noël-tide

THE STOLEN PLUM PUDDING.—THAT WAS AN IDEAL CHRISTMAS.
By E. Cockburn Reynolds.



"I HAVE NO 'IDEAL' CHRISTMAS, BUT THIS ISN'T A BAD WAY OF PASSING PART OF THE TIME."
By Gordon Browne, R.I.

arrives, we find our way to the old home and greet old friends, and spend this good festival in an atmosphere of kindliness and good-fellowship. This is why I hope Christmas will never die out. Young fellows out in the world should never fail to make for home at Christmastide, for, so long as a man keeps in touch with Home, so long is he likely to stick to the right path and play the game of life honourably. Christmas and Home! Aye, at Christmas, as at no other time of the year, "there's no place like Home."

THE OLD FAG.

(We very much regret that, owing to the great pressure on our space this month, we have been obliged to hold over the "Answers to Correspondents," but any reader who expected a reply in this number can obtain one direct by sending a stamped, addressed envelope. This notice also applies to the "Naturalists'" and "Athletic" Corners.)

MR. WHITWELL'S IDEAL CHRISTMAS IS TO BE HARD AT WORK ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS TO "THE GOLD BAT."

Results of October Competitions.

No. I.—"Well-known Men."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF BOXING GLOVES: John Brown, 13, Argyle-street, Paisley; W. Logan, c/o Raeburn, 14e, Mayfield, Edinburgh.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: C. Crossley, 62, Moorcliffe, Savile Park, Halifax; T. R. Davis, 6, Thurlby-road, Norwood, S.E.

HONOURABLE MENTION: C. H. Cruttenden, Maurice P. French, Geoffrey L. Austin, Randolph L. Pawlby, Wm. C. Haines, T. H. Walker, L. Barnish, F. O. Tolfield, E. W. Warden, Frank L. Cloux, Henry S. Stephenson, James Turner, Alex Scott, Junr.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF BOXING GLOVES: David Rankin, 2, Cadzow-place, Edinburgh.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Victor Gibbings, 28, Victoria-road, Exmouth; A. V. Lawrie, 113, Marchmont-road, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Herbert Dakers, A. Boulton, C. G. Mackay, Thomas P. Bennett, W. Walkley, N. Howard, K. Atkins, Archie E. H. Miller, Frederick J. Davis, R. C. De Morgan, Herbert Hamer, Rosalind Studholme, Andrew Paton.

No. II.—"Photographic."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF "SWAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: R. C. Higginson, 16, Beaconsfield villas, Brighton.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Noël E. Lean, 6, Elmore-road, Sheffield; F. R. Willis, 7, Clarence-street, Cheltenham; M. C. Rhodes, 19, Royal-avenue, Scarborough.

HONOURABLE MENTION: E. O. Courtman, Frank C. Cave, Ursula M. Peck, Cecil E. Gouldsmith, F. Futcher, H. E. Harvie, W. Paterson, H. Jennie Lindup, F. H. Durnford, William J. Watt, R. S. Smith, William Gray.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Eighteen.)

WINNER OF "SWAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: John H. Young, Balgowan, Dorking, Surrey.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: L. Biggs, Elmdon, Forest road, Moseley, Birmingham; William Angus Bagnall, The Groves, Winlaton-on-Tyne, Durham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: R. C. Woodthorpe, J. Ineson, Colin Gregory, Reginald Brombead Blaber, Alex. Hutchison, Cecil G. Waudby, Henry Ponsford, John M. Nicolle, Luttrell Byrom, George W. Taylor, C. L. Graham, Harold P. Tavener, R. Dollman, Robert H. Bacon, W. L. Taylor, Leonard Bonnard, A. Stanley Lee, L. B. De Fontaine, Kenneth W. Dowie

(Canada), L. F. Addison, C. L. B. Brockwell, Eric G. King, Frank Garratt, S. Williams, Frank J. Adams, P. E. Petter.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Fourteen.)

WINNER OF "SWAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: R. W. Reade, Fairlight Glen, Parkstone, Dorset.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED TO: Marjorie Hervey, The Lowlands, Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Edmund Gray, William Woodfin, G. E. Pearson, B. Witcombe, G. Maddison, G. N. Rigg.

No. III.—"My Favourite Quotation."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNERS OF PRINTING OUTFITS: R. H. Kay, Fieldhead, Oswestry, Salop; J. Jefferson Farjeon, 137, Fellows-road, South Hampstead, N. W.; Ursula M. Peck, 8a, Randolph-road, Maida Hill, W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: John Brown, Dora Avril, Percy Wm. Bennett, W. F. Johnston, Lilian Bowyer, M. V. Linde, J. Ferguson, John W. Lewis, Albert Albrow, Bernard W. Pask, M. E. Hamer.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNERS OF PRINTING OUTFITS: Sydney D. Wale, 299, Fulham-road, Chelsea, S.W.; Daphne Kenyon-Stow, The Rhydd, Hanley Castle, near Worcester; T. Spikin, 15, Queen's-road, Basingstoke.

HONOURABLE MENTION: David Lang, M. Rennell, Beryl Waters, Thomas A. Lowe, Winnie Middleton, J. Lowen, Stanley Williams, J. H. Honeysett, A. M. Toms, Kathleen Towersey, A. W. Louch, E. A. Campbell, Emily Lewis.

No. IV.—"Handwriting."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNERS OF POST-CARD ALBUMS: Arthur Wheeler, 104, Southchurch-road, Southend-on-Sea, Victor Towers, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire; Alan V. Denning, St. Dunstan's, Maney Hill-road, Sutton Coldfield.

HONOURABLE MENTION: H. V. Pascoe, Alfred Scholfield, Harry Frits, Fred. Hales, Harry Alden, Geo. R. Booth, W. P. Tolman, Connie Beamish, P. E. Petter, Harold Scholfield, William Shaw, E. J. Thomson, William A. Williams.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNERS OF POST-CARD ALBUMS: Harry Ide Anscombe, 204, Oving-road, Chichester; N. Miles Kemp, Aubrey House, Yeovil; Frederick J. Davis, 78, Elgin-avenue, Maida Hill, W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Arthur Green, Robert Brash, Claude Dach, Percy Darby, Winifred Gray, Brice Ferguson, W. G. Pickford, William Jackson, Winifred Parkin, W. S. Leeming.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNERS OF POST-CARD ALBUMS: Leslie Hulls, Grammar School, St. Ives, Hunts.; Alan Evans, St. Matthews, Ipswich; Henry Godfrey, Orphan Working School, Maitland Park, S.W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Thomas Harris, Charles Longbottom, Charles Blackwell, Alfred Smith, Earnest Shaw, Laurence E. Greening, E. Cunningham, Kenneth I. Duckett, Mary Crawford Priddes, Ella d'Arenberg, G. E. Whitson, Arthur Sample.

No. V.—"Missing Words."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNERS OF SANDOW'S DEVELOPERS: David Buchan, 9, King-street, Alloa, N.B.; Archibald Loy, 2, Cemetery road, Barnsley, Yorks.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED TO: J. F. Wilson, 16, George-road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: James Bruce, John Brown, L. Kerwood, W. M. Holman, Constance H. Greaves, Evelyn Pritchett, W. J. B. Crouch, John W. Hays, Dora Theakston, Elsie E. Collard, A. Clive Hay, E. G. Coldclough.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF SANDOW DEVELOPER: Arthur R. N. Rooksby, Castlegate, Grantham.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Arthur Atherton, 122, Castleton-road, Preston, Lancs.; A. D. Hutchison, 13, Clifford-street, Ibrox, Glasgow.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Ewart H. Swinstead, G. N. Warbrick, A. Bolton, Basil H. Binks, W. Wainwright, B. H. Witty, R. H. Newsome.

No. VI.—"Vegetarianism."

WINNERS OF SIX SHILLING BOOKS: John Leigh Turner, 153, Shaw Heath, Stockport, Maurice P. French, Abbeystone, Queen's-road, Bournemouth; Horace Brooks, 74, Merton-road, Wandsworth, S.W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Mrs. Anderson, Lilian Seal, Lilian Bowyer, G. G. Macfarlane, Wm. B. Becker, T. P. Coe, G. Currie, W. B. Faull, Henry T. Berry, Gertrude Watkin, H. E. Kennedy, Maud M. Lyne, Andrew McFadyean, C. H. Webster, Marian Hewitt.

Winners of Consolation Prizes are requested to inform the Editor which they would prefer—a volume of the "Captain," "Strand," "Sunday Strand," "Wide World," or one of the following books—"J. O. Jones," "Tales of Greyhouse," "Acton's Feud," "The Heart of the Prairie."

Comments on the October Competitions.

I.—This was such an easy competition that nearly all of the 2,300 entries were quite correct! Neatness therefore counted considerably. Some of the lists were beautifully written and arranged. The correct names were: Hayward, Browne, Bingham, Meredith, Kendal, Santley, Rolls, Huntley, Bigham, Coates, Austin, Barnes.

II.—The photographs were slightly below the average in quality. Woodland scenes were to the fore, some of our youngest competitors sending exceptionally good work of this nature.

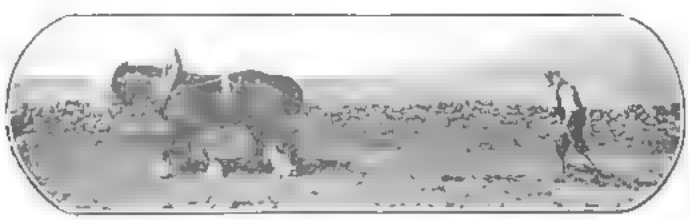
III.—As the most beautiful quotations were the most hackneyed, it was difficult to decide this competition, but I think the six prizes were well earned.

IV.—There was the usual large number of entries, the specimens of handwriting in all classes being excellent.

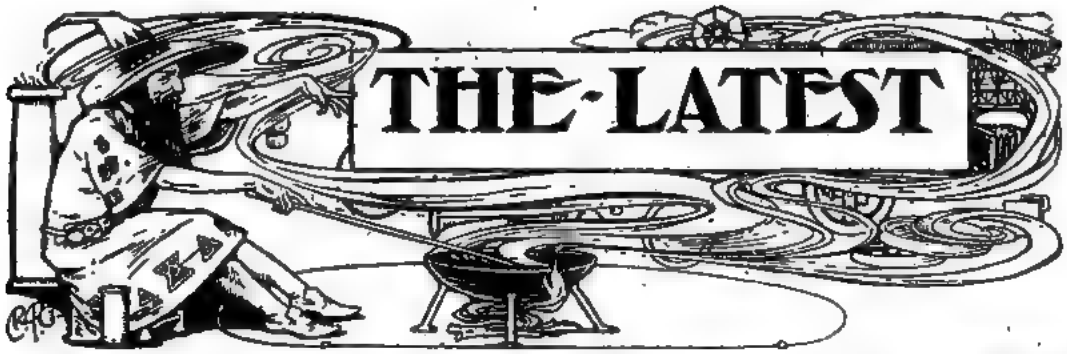
V.—The omitted words were: Development, water, selects, world, house, chooses, remembers, according, often, much, needs, question. A most difficult competition, no one guessing all the words correctly, although the prize winners in Class II. had only three wrong.

VI.—A large number of excellent letters were sent in, some in favour of and some against vegetarianism. The case for both sides was set down with great lucidity and fairness, but on the whole I think the non-vegetarians' arguments were superior—at any rate, they were weightier. The Editor hopes to print a selection of the best letters.

THE COMPETITION EDITOR.



A HARROWING SCENE.
By W. G. Culloden.



Christmas Conjuring.

In its advanced forms, conjuring is an art which necessitates many years of study and practice; but that need not discourage the would-be amateur conjurer. There is plenty of scope for both boy and girl CAPTAIN readers, who, by the aid of the "magic art," desire to amuse their friends this coming Christmas season. Messrs. Hamley's, of 231 High Holborn, London, will supply them at a small cost with the properties and directions necessary for the successful performance of scores of clever conjuring tricks. So ingeniously are these arranged that whilst they at once amuse and mystify an audience they are nevertheless quite easy to perform.

THE FAIRY RIBBONS.

Space only permits us to mention three tricks which we recently saw performed at one of Messrs. Hamley's establishments. "The Fairy Ribbons" forms the subject of our first illustration. In this trick a hat is borrowed and shown to be perfectly empty; then while standing in the middle of the audience, the performer commences to draw from the hat yard after yard of variegated ribbon, until the whole room or platform is covered with it. As this trick is so very mystifying it has proved a great favourite with the professional conjurer as well as amateurs.

In the "Flowers of Enchantment," the performer apparently merely takes a piece of paper, and, making it into a cone before the audience, shows it to be quite empty; but at once, on shaking it over a basket, a shower of beautiful various coloured flowers proceeds from it, filling the basket to overflowing. This is most simply accomplished, as Messrs. Hamley's directions clearly show. The effectiveness of the trick may be much improved by using the best paper flowers, such as "De Kolta," or roses, costing one shilling a dozen

THE OBO.

The "Wonderful Card Table" trick is the subject of another of our illustrations. First of all, examination of the table and cover is invited. A

THE FLOWERS OF ENCHANTMENT.

THE WONDERFUL CARD TABLE.

card is then chosen from the pack by one of the audience who is requested to tear it up and place the pieces on the table, with the exception of one, which he is to retain. The pieces are then covered over, and behold! upon removing the cover the card will be found perfectly whole with the exception of the piece retained, which will be found to fit exactly! This really sounds most magical; surely your curiosity prompts you to discover its secret?

The little demon in the bottle shown in an illustration on the preceding page is one of Messrs. Hamley's latest shilling novelties. The bottle is filled with water with a little air at the top, and by pressing the india-rubber covering, "Obo" dives and performs other queer antics.

Bricklaying by Machinery.

Year by year in almost every trade machinery steadily gains ground on manual labour, and now even the bricklayer is threatened! A short time ago we described in these pages a "mechanical sculptor"—the "mechanical bricklayer" is scarcely less ingenious. The machine is held in position by means of scaffolding, and works along a girder. Provided it is kept well supplied with bricks, it can do the work of five or six human bricklayers.

THE BRICKLAYING MACHINE AT WORK.

The Latest in Christmas Cards.

Every year Messrs. Raphael Tuck and Sons publish a host of Christmas novelties, and the enviable reputation which they have gained for themselves in the past bids fair to be further enhanced this season. A paraphrase of the words of a popular saying, "I only want to be a pebble on the beach," may well be imagined as

LISTENERS NEVER HEAR ANY GOOD OF THEMSELVES (FROM "PROVERBS IN PICTURE").

the plaintive appeal addressed by the "Christmas postcard" to the dignified Christmas-card proper, whose unique position it does not for a moment pretend to contest, being fully content if it can but secure some little share in the nobly-earned reputation of its great forbear, the Christmas card. Some 150 series of seasonable Christmas postcards are the means by which this laudable ambition is supported.

Messrs. Tuck make a point of employing many of the best-known artists of the day, and amongst these we note the names of John Hassall, A. Ludovici, Louis Wain, Alan Wright, Victor Venner, Hilda Cowan, and several others whose work is familiar to CAPTAIN readers. Out of this season's new "toy books," *All About the Wallypug*, by G. E. Farrow, and *Proverbs in Picture*, by Victor Venner, are *really* humorous. Amongst Messrs. Tuck's fine art coloured prints we would call attention to the eight pictures of some of the most interesting scenes from the works of Charles Dickens—"David Copperfield on his Way to School," "The Election at Eatanswill," "Mr. Pecksniff leaves for London," "On the Road to Dingley," etc.

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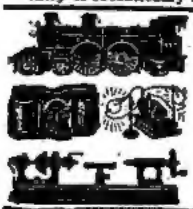

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7 inches long, suitable for basin or bath, each time the lamp is filled	Goes for 40 minutes		1/3	1/6
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Do. Do.	With Decks		3/6	3/9
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ROSS, James A., 300 Great Western Road, Aberdeen.

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ROWBOTHAM, E. Mansell, P.O. Box 6, Port Elizabeth, Cape Colony.

ROXBURGH, Hugh, "Hartville," Charles Street, Kilmarnock, Scotland.

RUBIE, William C., 2 Luther Terrace, Dover.

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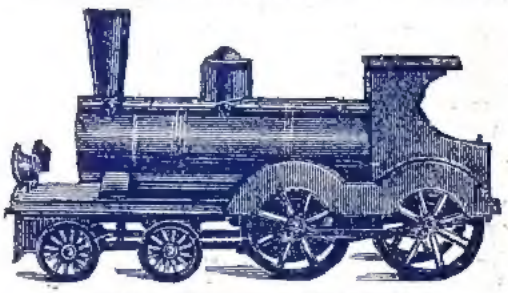

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